



My Slade Phenomenon

Cheryle J. Crockett

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This book is dedicated to my mother, Elsie Slade Spivey; my son, Tony; my daughter, Tracey; my grandchildren, Tramare and Talayna; with great gratitude to the family members who helped me with their informational guides; and to GOD, for giving to me four of my known forefathers. All of this would not have been possible without their gifts of life.

PROLOGUE

For African Americans living in the United States, the search in finding their ancestors, for most of us, has been a difficult task to undertake. American Indian slave descendants have also had the difficulty of proving their connections to their tribal heritages. Most of the records that were kept long ago did not have some of the information available for many groups of people living here during the early formation of this country. We are now researching for that information, not only because we want to know where we came from, but because we want to leave behind this information for our future generations of descendants.

With all ethnic groups of people occupying this planet we call home, for some of us we thought this task to find out this information would not exist, and some of it does not. Our only links we may have thought were of those we could physically see and touch and perhaps have only heard about through folklore. Our lineages, however, go far beyond this present-day existence.

There were many ancestors before us who paved the way to who we are. We are indebted and grateful for their existence here many years ago. In our lifetime, we can't possibly understand and search for all of this information, but we can start to look somewhere in our families' histories for it.

With the Internet and our modern-day technology on all aspects of our information age, it is not impossible to begin your search. The Internet, which came along with other sources of research material, has made what we thought as the impossible now a reality in finding out some of the information needed to connect with our unknown ancestors. The need to be fulfilled in the knowledge of our connection to others has driven thousands, if not millions, of people today to research their family lineages.

It became my obsession to take on this task and find out my existence here and how that might have come about. Take my journey into what I discovered would be the unthinkable to uncover one of my ancestors. It is my belief that the hand of God led the way for me to see this remarkable phenomenon.

Chapter One

MY FAMILY ANCESTRY OVERVIEW

It can be said a child, perhaps born every third generation or so, is born into a family line that can't be explained. That child in our family line was my mother, Elsie Slade. My mother's grandparents on her maternal side are of Indian and Jamaican ancestry. Her mother, Izora, married a man of whom I later discovered was of English descent. Perhaps it can be said my mother is of a revelation, one that was going to unfold in this time frame and in this universe of modern technology and books written on all subjects of life.

The third child of eight children, three sons and five daughters, she was born on November 7, 1921, to Andrew Slade and Izora Staten Slade. I feel my mother, the only daughter still alive from this Slade family, was the one left behind to identify the ancestry from one of these lineage lines. If she were not, this information would have been lost forever.

It must have been a revelation bestowed upon me from God to have witnessed one of the ancestors from which our family line comes. There is no other explanation regarding the turn of events I encountered as I discovered this ancestor. The timing of this discovery was unbelievable. There were strangers I had never met before who were able to answer any question for me regarding this ancestor on whom I was searching for more information. It seemed no matter where I turned or who I asked, there was always an answer.

In a *Byline Richmond Parts Distribution* paper dated July 1997, Team Richmond, it states as follows on my retirement from the company, "Cheryle Crockett, computer operator, will retire from Navistar after 33 years of service effective September 1997. Cheryle plans to relocate and publish her memories. Congratulations and good luck in future endeavors. Richmond will miss your contributions."

It's ironic to this day that here I am, writing my memoir in the month of September and in the year of 2006. The only difference is I'm writing about my ancestry, a subject that wasn't something I would have thought of to write about in my future years of retirement, beginning in September of 1997.

I was conceived in Oklahoma in the year 1944. My mother, Elsie, was a married woman and her husband, Elmer Walker, had enlisted in December 1942 in World War II. His enlistment took

him overseas to fight in the war. My mother was left behind to work wherever she could at that time in Oktaka-Muskogee, Oklahoma. Not completing her college education in Muskogee, Oklahoma, like her parents wanted her to do, she married a man she thought she loved until my father, Joseph William Wise, came along. The Wise family lived in the townships of Muskogee and Eufaula and my grandparents, Andrew and Izora Slade, her mother and father, lived there also.

With her husband, Elmer, overseas fighting in the war, one could say my mother got lonely. The visits with my father became more frequent. She met my father at the home of his sister, Alleatha, in 1944. My father was a single man when they met.

After several encounters of seeing each other at his sister's home, their affections for one another grew into a loving relationship. This loving relationship would be the start of an entirely different way of life, one she had not envisioned for herself upon becoming pregnant with me. I'm told I'm not her first child. She had a miscarriage several years before I came along.

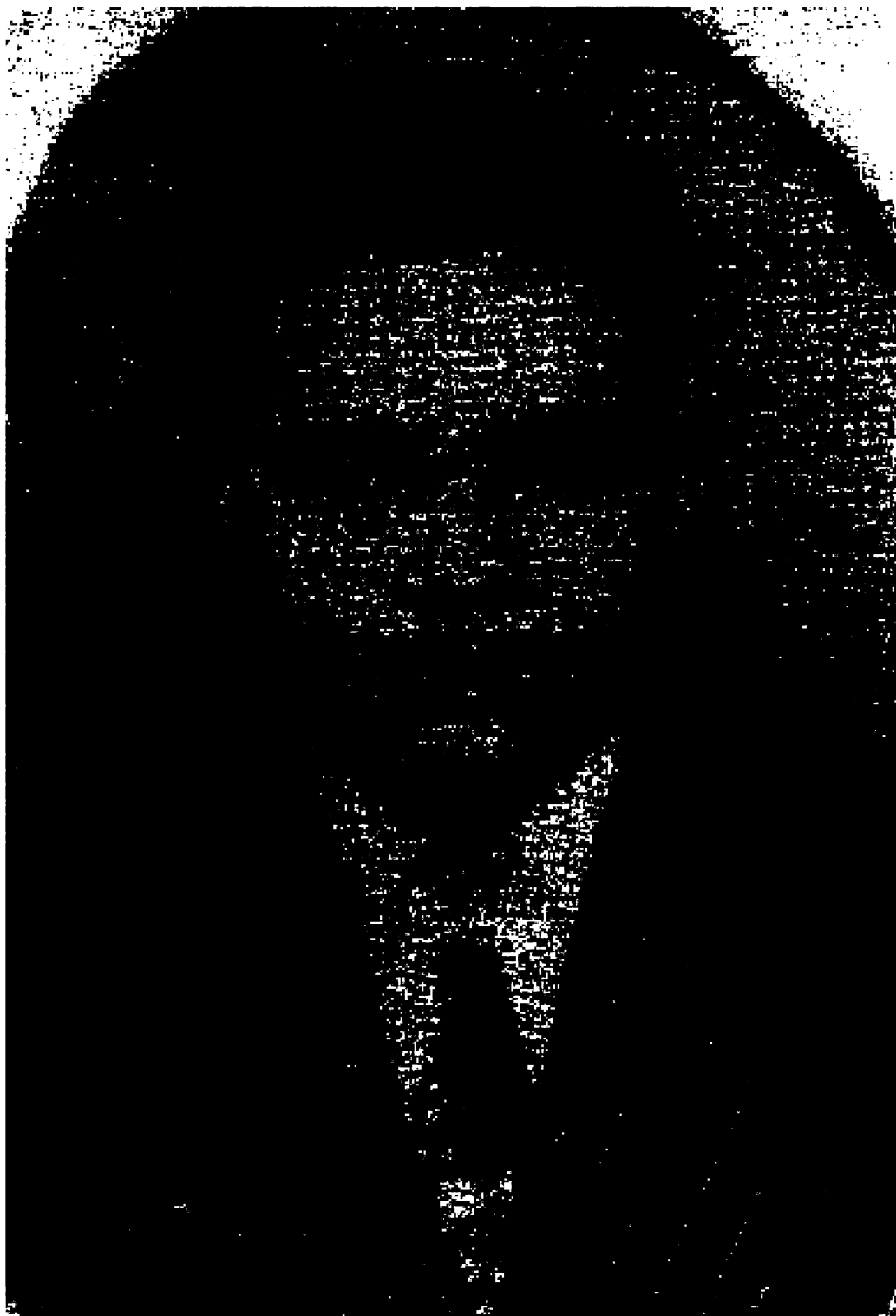
There was an old country doctor, so she tells me, who stated to her upon her miscarriage that she would not be able to conceive another baby. Well, one could say my mother felt safe in her actions when she became involved with my father.

Most of her family, the Slades, had already left Oktaka, Oklahoma, for Fresno, California, when she was married. The first from her family to come out to California from Oktaka, Oklahoma, was her brother, Robert Slade, who was in his early teens. Robert's Uncle Isaac Slade, my grandfather Andrew's brother, sent for him to come out to California in about the year of 1942 for grape and cotton harvesting. Out here in California, for them at that time, there seemed to be more money one could earn working in the farming fields on the West Coast. My Uncle Robert Slade, after working and saving part of his monies, next sent for his mother and father, a sister Marine and brother Ernest, and they came out from Oklahoma to California and joined them.

After my mother discovered she was pregnant with me, knowing this wasn't her husband's child, and her father, Andrew Slade, was sick with double pneumonia in California, she left Oktaka, Oklahoma. She sold all of her belongings and came out to California.

I was born on April 20, 1945, at St. Agnes Hospital in Fresno, California. World War II ended on August 6, 1945. The problem with my birth was because she had no money and she had left her husband, Elmer; there in Oktaka, Oklahoma, there was no way she could pay the hospital delivery care bill in Fresno for having me.

The Slade's family doctor, Dr. Callaway, told her since she was a serviceman's wife, the only way she wouldn't have to pay for the hospital bill was for me to take her husband's last name of Walker. My father's last name is Wise, and this is where my real story begins.



Joseph William Wise, father born in Oklahoma in October 1921



Chapter Two

WISE: FROM IRELAND TO AMERICA

Charlie Wise, my grandfather, upon hearing of my mother's pregnancy and learning she had left Oktaka-Muskogee, Oklahoma, felt a great loss because he loved "Jeanne," a nickname he had given to her. Besides my father, Joseph, being in love with my mother, Grandpa Charlie had also grown to love her and felt the need to find out where she was because she was carrying his son, Joseph's child. My father's sister, Alleatha Wise, was sent out to California from Oklahoma to search for my mother so my grandfather would know exactly where I was before I was born.

My Aunt Alleatha complied with her father, Charlie Wise's, wishes. After coming out to California from Oklahoma and taking a job in San Francisco, working as a baker in a bread and pastry store, she soon learned by accident that my mother had gone to Fresno to live with her mother and father. After getting the phone number of the Slades in Fresno, she made contact with my mother and came out to see me after my birth. My Aunt Alleatha reported back to my Grandfather Charlie Wise in Oklahoma that I had been located. From that point on or even before I knew of my father's sister, Alleatha, she would play a huge part in my life until her death in 1991.

While I was growing up as a young child, the years seemed to come and go. I couldn't at first figure out why my other siblings were never going with me when my Aunt Alleatha would come to get me for my annual visit with her in Redwood City, California. From her, my father, and my grandfather, I would receive special presents for my birthday, Easter, and Christmas. She bought most of my school clothes and I took vacations with her to visit my Grandfather Charlie in Oklahoma when I was a small child. I even remember singing "Mary Had a Little Lamb" to him as a toddler. My Aunt Alleatha had always told me I was part Irish. I didn't at that time understand just what that meant. I grew up into adulthood and went through my entire life up to this point in time being called negro, colored, black, and African American. I kept remembering her saying over and over again when I was a small child that I was also part Irish.

My Grandfather Charlie Wise, as I remember growing up as a small child, was a short, stocky-built man with straight snow-white hair. He was born in the month of October 1871, and

the 1880 census tells me he is listed as mulatto. My Aunt Alleatha, as well as my father and their other siblings within this family, were listed the same way. Just what mulatto meant, I didn't quite understand, because I had never heard anyone in our family use that phrase before.

My obsession about learning more of my ancestry began at the end of March 2005. I somehow sensed I just had to call my father's stepdaughter, Mayme Diggs, in Kansas. I had not seen Mayme since my last visit with my father in Kansas in the summer of 1962 just before I entered the twelfth grade. For some unknown reason to me at that time, I felt I had to phone her and got the phone number from my half-brother, Merle Wise, her brother, who was also living there in Kansas.

Mayme and I corresponded over the phone for a few weeks. We were trying to catch up on over forty years of what had happened in our lives since we last saw each other. She had been married with one daughter, and I'd gotten married and had two children, one son and one daughter.

One day one of our phone conversations went from Mayme asking me how I had been since our last phone conversation to her wanting to know more information about her Cherokee Indian grandmother. She desperately wanted to find out where her grandmother, whose name was also Mamie but was spelled differently than hers, was married and where she could find more information on getting her birth and death certificates.

With our conversation that day, I said to Mayme I happen to have an Indian great-grandmother on my mother's side. She asked me if I knew what tribe my great-grandmother came from. Lost for a comment to her statement while we were talking, I told her I didn't know but would find out as soon as our phone conversation for the evening was over.

Oblivious of not knowing some of these things, I phoned my mother to find out about my Indian side. I asked her if she knew the name of the tribe of Indians with whom our family line was associated. To my astonishment, when I asked her about her Grandmother Clara Hyams Staten, on my Indian side, she didn't know.

There was a picture of my Great-grandmother Clara on my mother's living room wall, and that picture of her had been there for many years. A first cousin of my mother's had given this picture to her for safekeeping. It was the last known picture taken of her Grandmother Clara before she died.

It would be my next phone call after talking to my mother that would give that answer about her grandmother to me. Her brother, Robert Slade, still living in Fresno, California, was able to tell me the name of the tribe of Indians with whom we were associated. He said we were from the Choctaw Tribe of Indians, also known as "The Five Civilized Tribes" of the United States.

I had never heard anything about Choctaw Indians before in my family after being around them all of my life. Repeating the name "Choctaw" over the phone, I had to ask my Uncle Robert if he would spell it for me. I felt so dumbfounded. This was a name of an Indian tribe never even whispered in my presence. With my great-grandmother's picture and the tribal name of Choctaw, I suddenly realized I had never felt the need to ask anything about her or anyone else who came before me until that moment, a moment in time that with what I discovered later

on was so precise and so perfect. I would later understand why this valuable piece of information would be understood regarding the research in which I had engaged myself.

My Grandfather Charlie and the Wise family had the wisdom and insight to always let me know where I came from. It was his passion as spoken by my Aunt Alleatha because of my circumstances that I began to understand why he felt that way.

After talking to Mayme and finding out my great-grandmother was of the Choctaw Tribe of Indians, I had to find out why it was so important for my Grandfather Charlie to find me and make sure I always knew where I came from. With Alex Haley's beginnings of a slave boy named Kunte Kinta from Gambia and with folklore told to him by his generations of descendants, I had established my roots from Grandpa Charlie.

My search for my Grandfather Charlie's family started around mid-April of 2005 on *Ancestry.com*. It showed me the story behind his birth. His father came out of Ireland, and his name was Patrick Wise. My Aunt Alleatha has told me over the years I spent with her that this was her grandfather and his name was Patrick.

My Great-grandfather, Patrick Wise, came to the United States as an immigrant embarking out of Liverpool, England. His home was in Ireland, and he was leaving from there on a ship called the *St. George* in the steerage compartment of the ship. His port of arrival was New York, where he arrived on March 20, 1849. The type of transit shows him staying in the United States. With him were a brother named John Wise, and Allan Wise, a possible family member. They were all aboard the same ship, the *St. George*, and arriving in New York.

Also aboard this ship were a wife, Johanna, and a couple of children. Their home in 1850 was in Clear Creek, Warren, Ohio, where he found work as a farmer to take care of his family. In 1860 he lived in Turtle Creek, Warren, Ohio.

There was no one around to tell me why he emigrated here from Ireland. When I was researching my Indian heritage, however, I learned of the Irish Famine, which dated from 1845 to 1849 in Ireland. He arrived here in 1849, I'm sure because of the hunger famines that plagued Ireland in the first half of the nineteenth century.

There was a potato blight that destroyed the potato farms in Ireland. The "Aran Banner," a popular type of potato, grown because it could produce the largest crop of potatoes, was grown by farmers. The strain of a highly susceptible fungus called "*Phytophthora infestans*" was commonly known as "blight." This continued for several more years, and Ireland's inhabitants, along with politics that were going on there, were starving to death. The Indians were supplying corn for the starving peasants in an effort to ward off starvation, but two million plus of their population died anyway.

In an effort perhaps to save his family's life, the only other alternative was to leave their homeland in search for a better one, which was the choice he made in a desperate decision to leave the country. My great-grandfather made his living by farming, so I understood why he came over here. But, where did my Grandfather Charlie Wise come in to this family?

Upon searching the records on *Ancestry.com* one night, I'll say around late April or early May of 2005, I finally found that answer. After searching and searching their records, I finally had

to phone Ancestry with a suggestion. I told a customer service representative that after logging out of their website for whatever reason and then having to log back in to it, starting all over again for the person I had found for one record, the programmer logged me off, and then when I wanted to reenter the same information for that person, it should let me leave off where I had stopped or found that information. Also, since the census years were taken at intervals of every ten years with the information I was requesting on a name, it should give me the best files that can be purged on that person's census years.

This was eventually done, and what I found out was my grandfather's mother's name was Mary Jane Williams, born in Louisiana in the year 1840. She is my great-grandmother and in 1880 was living in West Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She is also listed as mulatto. She was married to a John Williams, who was a carpenter there in Baton Rouge, and they had several children together.

Patrick Wise, my great-grandfather, had a brother living with Mary Jane Williams, and he is listed as a boarder with the occupation of a cooper. A cooper, I found out, was someone engaged in making barrels for storing different items like beverages, flour, rice, sugar, etc.

Mary Jane Williams's husband, John, had died a few years before my Grandfather Charlie was born into this family, and she became a washerwoman, taking in a boarder to make ends meet and survive. Evidently when my Great-grandfather Patrick would come to visit his brother, John Wise—I'll just use the phrase "Oh, Walla."

I learned my great-grandfather told his wife, Johanna, of the son he had with Mary Jane Williams, my great-grandmother. It is my belief she also was part Choctaw or Cherokee Indian, born there in Louisiana. Her maiden name may have been Hunt.

Now I understood why I always had contact with this side of my family. Grandpa Charlie's father, Patrick, never denied him and provided for him like he did the rest of his children. He loved his father very much, enough for my grandfather to have instilled within himself those same feelings because of his situation growing up in this family for me to understand just who I was.

I do have in my possession a sword of my Great-grandfather Patrick Wise, which he might have brought over here from Ireland and gave to his son, Charlie. This piece of history will remain in my family from my Irish ancestor and pass down as an heirloom for my children's families to cherish his memory.

Growing up with my Aunt Alleatha and not my father all my life was wonderful, and I loved being around her. She never had any children of her own, and she looked out for me as a loving aunt. There was a lot I had learned from her growing up and visiting with her. She was instrumental in my interest of learning how to sew, making at one point in time just about all of my clothing when I became a young woman. I'll never forget one incident that comes to mind as a child of about twelve or thirteen years old.

I remember Aunt Alleatha working for a very wealthy family, the Stanleys in Atherton, California. The area she worked in was a wooded community comprised of multimillion-dollar mansions. I loved the drive in the morning, leaving from Redwood City and going to work with

her. Being a young child, it seemed like forever for her to get to our destination, going into the city of Atherton. It was like going into another environment when we did arrive there. This family was in the business of making hand tools and, I believe, dinnerware. Also living in this surrounding area is the famous child movie star of the 1930s and 1940s, Shirley Temple Black, actress and stateswoman.

In the summer months, I would go to Redwood City for my annual visit when school was out. My aunt was the maid for this family at that time and responsible for running the entire household five days a week, which included cooking, cleaning, serving meals, and ordering their food supplies and whatever else she did while employed there.

One summer when I came to visit her, she had just bought a brand-new lilac-colored Cadillac with a cream-colored hardtop. She wanted to feel rich even though she wasn't by any means. Atherton and Menlo Park here in California were beautiful areas, and one could tell only rich people lived there. I would always play on the residents' family grounds while she worked inside their home.

From the Stanleys's home, I can remember leaving out the back door from their kitchen and traveling on a brick-laid walkway, and there was a small cottage house. Ivy plants draped the structure on just about all sides of it, and I would go inside sometimes and make believe it was my home. This was also where, if she wanted, she would go and just relax after her chores were done for the day. The cottage house would also at times be occupied by guests. If the residence guests wanted to stay over in the cottage house, it could be used instead of sleeping in the residence home.

The home site probably covered four or five acres of land. To the best of my knowledge, I remember it had a swimming pool, badminton court, a small golf area, a tennis court, and all the beautiful flowering plants one could think of. My aunt loved the color variety of the rose bushes most of all and would cut some of the roses and bring them home with her in their flowering months.

One day while we were in the kitchen area, I heard the resident of the home say to my aunt before we left for the day that there was going to be a business dinner party on Saturday. She wanted to know if my aunt could work that day, and my aunt said yes. I recall the resident next asked her if her husband, my Uncle Lewis Franklin, would be their butler for the evening. She assured the resident they would both be there on Saturday evening with no problem.

Upon leaving Atherton back to Redwood City that evening, my aunt stopped in town and picked up a tuxedo on the way home but placed it in the trunk of her vehicle. Being very curious as a child as to why she was doing this, I watched as this was being done but did not understand why she had placed it there instead of in the vehicle's backseat area. She also didn't remove the tuxedo from the car when we arrived home.

Uncle Lewis was a gas station attendant there in Redwood City and probably only had an eighth grade education. What he went to work in was a uniform supplied by his workplace. There were several uniforms he changed into as the week came to an end. To my knowledge, he didn't associate himself too much with what he referred to as the other "folks." I'm sure he

had his reasons, but when we got home, I noticed she didn't tell him about the business dinner party until much later in the evening.

My Uncle Lewis was also a tall man with wavy, graying hair and a large mustache that sometimes needed trimming. He loved to drink and wore false teeth. Because of his teeth, which really didn't fit well in his mouth, he seemed to speak almost perfect English, I'd say to keep them in place when you held a conversation with him.

This particular night after dinner, which my aunt always brought home from work, she had a problem trying to find the right time and place to get situated to confront him with the question of whether or not he would be the butler at the residence home in Atherton.

What she didn't tell him at first was that he was going to be paid fifty dollars for the evening's work. His job, according to what was said that day upon leaving, would have been to greet the residence business guests at the front entry door, take their hats, purses, and coats, and help her with serving dinner and wine during the residence business affair there on Saturday.

Well, knowing how she knew he felt about the other side, or those "folks," she had no choice but to tell him about the fifty dollars she wanted to keep for herself. My aunt loved money. Finally after she realized the answer from him was going to be "hell, no," she told him about the money.

At that point of what she told him, Uncle Lewis gulped down some dinner wine and said to her, "Did you say fifty dollars, Leatha?" which was a shorter version of her real name, and she said to him in her high-pitched voice, "Yes, Lewis! That's what I said, Lewis!" His false teeth almost fell out of his mouth, I guess because of the thought of that amount of money being paid to him in one evening's work. His next reply was, "Where's the damn butler's suit, Leatha? I'm going with yaw."

The next night, we drove to the Stanleys's home in Atherton for the business dinner party. I watched as they both attended to their chores of setting the table, arranged the seating areas, checked the flower arrangements, and got ready to greet the guests. Uncle Lewis had already spit-shined his best shoes and looked rather spiffy in that tuxedo and those white gloves. He greeted the residence guests using his best English manner, which wasn't too much of a problem because of his false teeth.

My aunt had already told him while en route to the Stanleys's residence in Atherton to be on his best behavior and not embarrass her while we were there. He was more fun to be around when he had a couple of shots of liquor in him. He admired President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and told each guest arriving he would love to be referred to as "Franklin D," which the guests called him while they were there.

From what I can remember, I was watching both of them standing by wooden swinging kitchen doors and giggling. They were going back and forth with trays of wine, platters of food entrees, and water pitchers. I had never seen both of them act that way before. I had to admit, however, when the evening was over, Uncle Lewis did an excellent job. His job of being the butler that night was so good he was given extra monies for his conversation with the residence business guest as each one was leaving. They all seemed to thoroughly enjoy his conversations, even with him going without his usual shots of liquor.

My Slade Phenomenon

On the way home, Uncle Lewis told my Aunt Alleatha to let him know if he was ever again needed for such an interesting evening. And yes, he kept all of the tips he received from the dinner party. She was furious, but she got over it.

Chapter Three

HYAMS: THE CHOCTAW NATIVE INDIAN

My Indian ancestry starts with my great-grandmother, Clara Hyams Staten, born in Louisiana on October 28, 1875, to Benjamin Hyams and Martha Williams. Folklore tells me they are both from the Choctaw Indian nation. The Choctaws, along with the Cherokees, Seminole, Creek, and Chickasaw Indians, were given the title of "The Five Civilized Tribes" of the United States after living mainly in the State of Mississippi. Andrew Jackson, the President of the United States at that time, in around the year 1830, wanted the land on which these Indian nations were living.

In our family, there was an oil lease document I copied at work around the year 1984 or 1985. There was an allotment of six hundred forty acres of land located in Shreveport, Louisiana, in the parish of Caddo that involved my Grandmother Izora Staten Slade and her siblings. I, along with other family members, knew nothing regarding the facts of why no one was able to explain just what this meant. This was left up to me to research to this day. The Internet had not yet come along and to my astonishment, there was no one alive who knew what the circumstances were surrounding this land lease involving drilling for oil usage contained.

The description of the land on this agreement with my grandmother and her siblings read as follows:

The Southwest quarter of Section 8, Southwest quarter of Section 9, Northwest quarter of Section 16, Northeast quarter of Section 17, Township 14 North, Range 16 West, Caddo Parish Louisiana containing 638.881 acres.

My Grandmother Izora Staten was born August 7, 1900, in DeBerry, Texas. She is the sixth child of fourteen born to Clara Hyams Staten and Wiley Staten. My grandmother's siblings were Isabella Staten, born in 1893; Ibera Staten, born in 1895; Wiley Staten Jr., born in 1896; William McKinley Staten, born in 1897; and Whitfield Staten, born in 1898. My grandmother was born in 1900, Willis Roseburs Staten was born in 1902, Inetta Staten was born in 1903, Woodall Staten was born

in 1905, Warren Staten was born in 1906, Marvin Staten was born in 1907, Benjamin Staten was born in 1909, Wilfred Staten was born in 1911, and Ruth Staten was born in 1915.

There was a silent era in which none of this was ever talked about in families. I can only imagine people just didn't want to confront the past eras from where they came. This was the passage of an era in time I'm sure they just wanted to forget about because of the hard times through which their families and friends must have gone. When I learned more about the tribe from which I came, I too understood their fears and anguish, the invasion of their homelands, and their deaths and despairs.

I cried out for them, knowing one of my ancestors was going through the removal period out of the state of Mississippi. After all of these Indian tribes were taken out of their homelands and forced into a new way of life, in memory of this tragedy every year is a celebration in honor of those fallen.

The Choctaws were the first ones to be removed around the month of September of 1830. I understood more now the look on my great-grandmother's face that depicted some of the anguish that perhaps her father and mother told her about after she was born, besides having those fourteen children.

Her father was Benjamin Hyams, born in Mississippi in the year 1840. His parents may have been some of the ones left behind. The Choctaws who didn't remove out of Mississippi at that time when the removal process began were referred to as the "Mississippi Choctaws."

It was the Choctaw Chief Mushulatubbee, along with the other chiefs of the Five Civilized Tribes, who negotiated the treaties with the United States Government and who signed the Removal Act Treaty. The treaty the five chiefs signed was called the "Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek" in September 1830. The Choctaws were removed in the winter months with guides from the United States who had been commissioned to lead them out of their homelands into Indian territory, which later became the state of Oklahoma.

There were deaths, hunger, and diseases that would kill thousands of Indians along the way. To this day, no one knows what the exact number of deaths is. Some estimation according to some records put the figures between two thousand to four thousand lives lost. With these deaths of loved ones and with the migration in Louisiana and Oklahoma upon reaching their long-distraught journey, this deadly removal became known as "The Trail of Tears," a historic event today that is celebrated in memory of those fallen in the removal journey out of Mississippi.

I located my Choctaw ancestors living in Louisiana and Texas. My great-great-grandfather, Benjamin Hyams, in the census year of 1880, is shown to be a laborer living in the 5th Ward on the Red River, and it states his mother and father were both born in Mississippi. I'm still searching for their names. There were some Indians who hid from census takers so they were not counted at all.

The state of Louisiana's parish of Caddo shows them being married on August 22 in the year 1873. He had to pay a fifteen dollar bond for their marriage license. Martha Williams, his wife, was born in Louisiana in about 1856. She was living with her father, my third great-grandfather, Aaron Williams, who is a farmer born in about 1830 in Mississippi. My third great-grand-

mother, Margaret Williams, was born in about 1840 in Louisiana. Martha William's siblings were Alfred, Mahala, Burrell, John, and William.

On December 11 in the year 1892, Clara Hyams, his daughter, and Wiley Staten were married in Caddo, Louisiana. For this marriage, a one hundred-dollar bond was posted, and this was because she was considered underage at the time in the state of Louisiana. Their marriage would lead them from Louisiana to Texas. It is my belief that my great-grandfather, Wiley Staten, may have either met Clara on her father's farm while looking for work or locally in town. Shreveport, Louisiana, is not far traveling on horseback or mule and wagon, looking for work in Texas, where I found they were living in Breckenridge Springs, Panola County, Texas, in 1900.

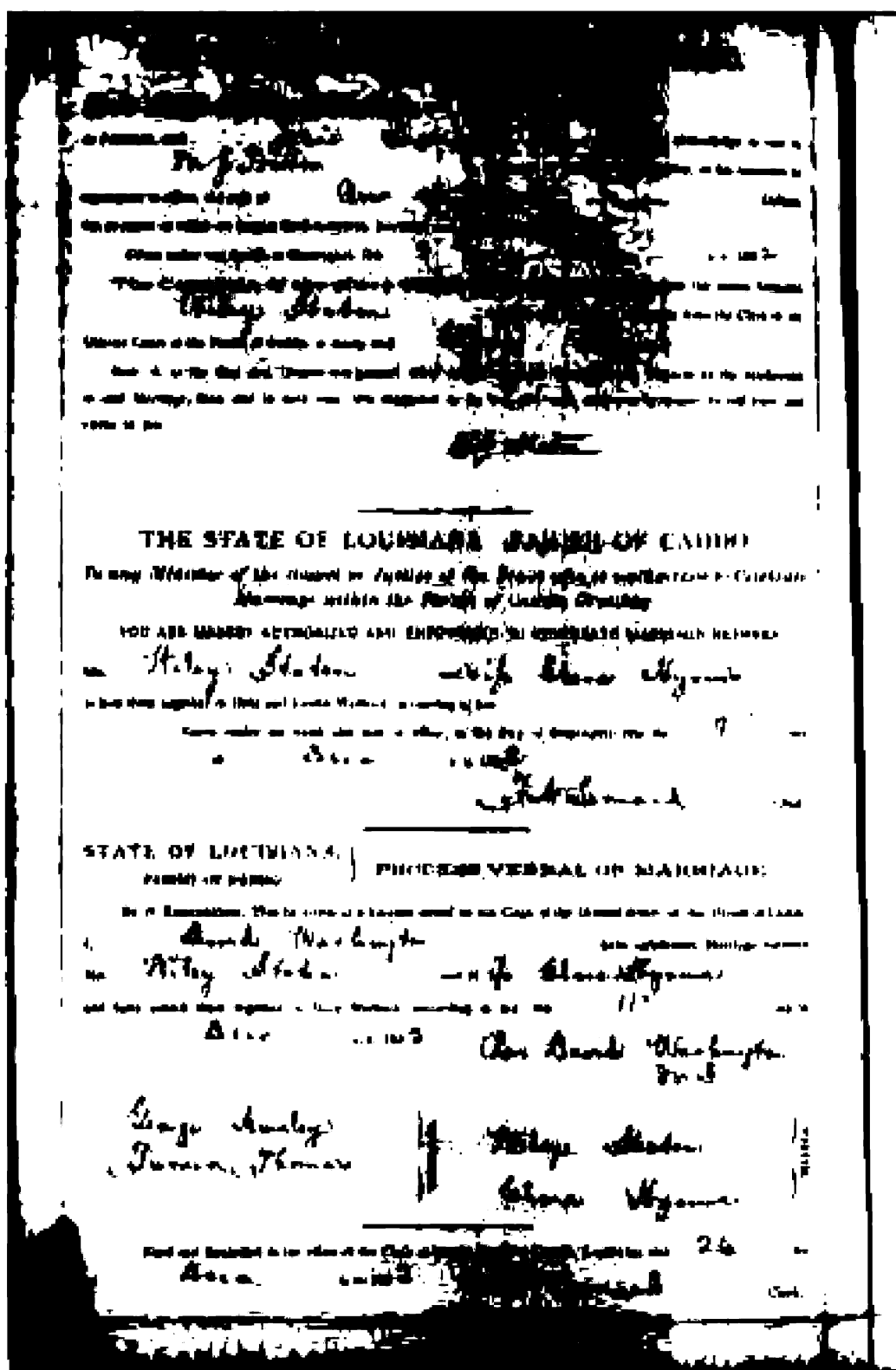
As I began searching more regarding my Indian ancestry, I also learned the Five Civilized Tribes of the United States owned slaves. No one in our family had mentioned anything about this, either. I was slowly but surely uncovering the secrets my family never talked about. Someone with knowledge of this had to have spoken of these facts along the way. Even today, when I think I had been around my own grandmother, Izora Staten Slade, who was part Indian, I never even heard her speak of any Indians, only slaves were discussed sometimes. They must have believed we were better off not knowing some of these things that happened to our family members many years ago.

There was an appropriation bill passed on March 3, 1893, to extinguish tribal autonomy and start the process of negotiating an allotment agreement. Commission delegations of three members were given the full power to negotiate with the Five Civilized Tribes. Under President Grover Cleveland, the appointments went to Henry L. Dawes of Massachusetts, Meredith Helm Kidd of Indiana, and Archibald S. McKennon of Arkansas. The allotment period ran from 1893 to 1914.

In response to a question I had regarding my Choctaw lineage, this notation came on June 8, 2005, from the National Archives and Records Administration, the Southwest Region, located in Fort Worth, Texas. I received an answer regarding the enrollment period because after receiving the printed material, which indicates the names of persons enrolled on the Dawes Commission rolls, I couldn't find the surname Hyams. Their surname Hyams did indicate they owned at one time 638.881 acres located in Shreveport in the parish of Caddo. My ancestor Ben Hyams was the first patentee of this square mile of land.

The information from the National Archives indicated an act of Congress on June 27, 1898 (30 Stat. 459), authorized the commission to the Five Civilized Tribes (commonly known as the Dawes Commission) to prepare "final rolls" of the names of persons recognized by the commission as members of the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole tribes. More than one hundred one thousand persons who were alive between 1898 and the closing of the rolls in 1907 were enrolled by the commission, which also rejected the applications of over one hundred fifty thousand people. In general the commission did NOT enroll anyone who was not living in what is now Oklahoma.

This region, it said, had custody of more than two thousand cubic feet of records created by the Dawes Commission, including enrollment cards and applications. If you find your ancestors' names on the Dawes Index, then look up their roll number on this index and you will



Marriage certificate of Wiley Staten and Clara Hyams,
December 11, 1892, in Caddo, Louisiana.

have found their census card number. I have located no comprehensive indexes to people who were rejected. I can provide copies of enrollment cards and documents from the related application jacket if you provide the enrollee's name, tribe, and census card number.

Freedman census cards do not contain degrees of Indian blood. Freedmen are former slaves or descendants of former slaves who were enrolled as tribal members and allotted lands in severalty during the allotment process.

With this information, I began looking more into the fact that slaves were living among the Five Civilized Tribes. One website I was told about by a neighbor who was selling his property to move back to Oklahoma was that of Eleanor "Gypsy" Wyatt. The neighbor's great-grandmother was part Choctaw Indian with a slave descendant, and her name was on the Dawes Commission Roll. He had researched the information already but couldn't claim membership with the Choctaw nation of Oklahoma.

There was land claimed there under his great-grandmother's family descendants, and he told me she said before her death to make sure the land was taken care of. What he didn't understand was why he couldn't become a member of the Choctaw nation just because there was no record of a degree of Indian blood recorded at the time of the Dawes Commission enrollment process. Why, with the necessary information he had obtained from the archives in Texas, would he be denied entry into his rightful place with this tribe of the Choctaw Indian nation? He had gone to Oklahoma on several occasions for the Freedmen's annual celebration of their ancestral heritage.

When I went to visit Eleanor "Gypsy" Wyatt's website, I was astonished at the scope of information she had researched for her ancestry being that of a Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Creek Indian slave descendant also. For the Freedman descendants of the Five Civilized Tribes, all the information was there for anyone researching their Indian heritage to read about.

I logged on to every informational link she had researched and learned more about my Choctaw ancestor also. Her compassion to educate the public regarding where one's Indian descendants and slave Indian descendants derived from was just beckoning for me to look up. Within her website are some of the following links that will lead you perhaps to the unanswered questions she even states for herself, and one is "Whose blood is this that runs through my veins?"

Black Indians' Self-Determination
Freedman Descendants Registry
Equity Case 7071: Descendants Registry
Executions at Fort Smith
Beginners Choctaw Grammar
Cherokee Phonetic
Smoke Signals News
Smoke Signals Talk Message Forum
Index of Freedman Rolls Numbers
1910 Oklahoma African-Natives (with degree of Indian Blood)
1885 Chickasaw & Choctaw Freedman Roll

My Slade Phenomenon

Dawes Index by Blood

Final Roll by Book

Cherokee Roll, Choctaw Roll, Chickasaw Roll, Creek and Seminole Roll

1860 Slave Schedule Index

Freedman Surnames (Alphabetical)

Cherokee Slave, Choctaw Slave, Chickasaw Slave, and Creek Slave

These are just a few links her website contains, all researched over a ten-year span. Eleanor "Gypsy" Wyatt claims Chickasaw, Choctaw, Cherokee, and Creek Indian heritage. At the present time, I can only claim Choctaw, but my research for this side of me isn't over yet. There's more to uncover as I journey forward.

There was one other notation she stated that I felt within my soul knowing what I know now. That statement on one of her web pages shows pictures from her childhood to adulthood and she states, "I created this page for one reason. In all the searching I've done, I would have loved to have found just one picture of my ancestors. Thus to fulfill these desires of my descendants, I created this page in hope that somewhere, sometime, and somehow or someplace, they will find it."

The Treaty of 1866 between the United States and the Choctaw and Chickasaw tribes made provisions for the allotment of their lands in severalty. The provision further provided that notices were to be given not only in the two nations, but also in the states of Mississippi, Tennessee, Louisiana, Texas, and Arkansas. If the lands weren't occupied within the five years, Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians' lands would be forfeited. It is my belief my great-great-grandfather, Benjamin Hyams, or Martha, his wife, selected the 638.881 acres located in Caddo, Louisiana, with the script given to them regarding the Treaty of 1866.

Another website on the Internet I visited one night was that of W.R. Brantley, "Red Wolf," and in Indian, "Humma Nashoba." I signed his guest book that night and gave him some information regarding my Choctaw great-grandmother, Clara Hyams Staten. I stated to him the year she was probably born and that she lived in Louisiana. He emailed me back on February 15, 2005:

Hello, Cheryle,

Thank you so much for your visit to my website. I was interested in knowing what part of Louisiana your great grandmother was from since I am from Louisiana and have some Choctaw heritage.

Thanks again, Red Wolf

My response to Red Wolf on February 16, 2005:

All I know at this time is my great-grandmother was born in Louisiana and migrated to Texas, where my grandmother, Izora Staten, was born on August 7, 1900,

in DeBerry, Panola County. What I'd also like to know is if there is somewhere I can go to register as part Choctaw Indian. I was conceived in Oklahoma in 1944 but born in California in 1945.

Red Wolf's reply on February 16, 2005:

There are quite a few Choctaw bands in Louisiana and thousands of Choctaw not in bands. Is your great-grandmother the line of Choctaw you are pursuing to connect to? As I'm sure you know, to register with the Oklahoma Choctaw, you must unfortunately connect to the Dawes Roll, and they have the right to refuse you. Other off-reservation bands have different and varied criteria.

If I can be of help, let me know. We are making preparations for opening our cultural center with ceremonial grounds, museums, and research libraries in the future. We also are applying for state recognition in the future. Since your great-grandmother was Louisiana Choctaw, it's good to know you, cousin.

Keep in touch, Red Wolf

My response to Red Wolf on March 26, 2005:

Hello again, Red Wolf,

I wrote to the Choctaw nation of Oklahoma on March 10, 2005, and am awaiting a response from them. You mentioned other Choctaw Indians not being in bands. Just how do I go about perhaps contacting them also? I'm here in California, so would you guide me to find out just where to go? Ever since I've discovered my great-grandmother was from the Choctaw tribe, I've been totally committed to finding out whatever I can about who her mother was. Seems some of the "ole folk" in their day just didn't pass on this valuable information to the grands, great-grands, etc. Let me know if you can help, and whenever I get confirmation on my request from the Choctaw nation, I'll let you know what the outcome is. Till later and thanks again.

Cheryle Crockett (Choctaw)

My response to Red Wolf on April 17, 2005:

I sent you an email requesting info on the Freedman list to qualify for enrollment into the Choctaw nation as a member. Are you a descendant of a Freedman Choctaw by blood? I do have the Dawes Commission books here for me to look at if you are interested. Hoping to hear back from you soon.

Cheryle

My Slade Phenomenon

Red Wolf's reply on April 19, 2005:

The Freedman's lists will be that of the Dawes roll or supporting material leading to or after it. I am not connected to the Choctaw nation of Oklahoma as my reservation. There are many Choctaw bands in my area such as the Jena Choctaw. My ancestors lived on the Red River long before the U.S. Government made the Louisiana Purchase and made us part of the U.S. It is good to hear from you. Keep in touch, and if I can be of help let me know.

Your cousin, Red Wolf

My reponse to Red Wolf on May 3, 2005:

I've learned from Ancestry.com that my great-great-grandfather, Ben Hyams, born in 1840, lived in a town called Natchitoches, Louisiana, and he was a farmer. Do you know anything about the fact that there were Indian reservations because the 1900 census says he and my great-great-grandmother lived in Police Jury Ward 5, Natchitoches? I understand that Natchitoches is an Indian tribe also. Please give me some insight if you know what I'm talking about. This has been just a fascinating adventure for me to learn of my ancestry.

Cheryle

Red Wolf's reply on May 10, 2005:

Cheryle,

Natchitoches parish is where I was born. HMMMMMMMM, this is going to be interesting. There were no Indian reservations there but many Indians in bands, groups from many tribes. These are those who chose not to accept reservations. The Red River goes through several parishes. Natchitoches, Winn, Grant, and Indians lived along and used this waterway. Tribes included Choctaw, Pascagula, Cherokee, and the Natchitoches as part of the seven tribes of the Caddo Confederacy. I could go on and on but will stop now. Keep in touch. I want to check Ben Hyams through our archives. Write soon.

Red Wolf

My response to Red Wolf on September 19, 2005:

Hello, Red Wolf,

I've been watching along with others the tragedies along the Gulf Coast, still with disbelief at what has happened there. Hurricane Katrina has devastated that part of the area of the United States. What I'd like to know next is how far you are

from the parish of Caddo because this is where my great-grandmother and great-grandfather were married. I understand some property given to my great-great-grandfather, Benjamin Hyams, is there also, and what is the area like if you know anything about that parish? Have you had any more luck on finding out your lineage line? Till next time, take care.

Cousins in Common

Red Wolf's reply on September 19, 2005:

Hi, Cheryle,

I fear there will be continuing tragedies nationwide. Caddo Parish is only a short distance from me in Winn Parish. As with all of North Louisiana, to me it's beautiful forests, lakes, streams, and hills. Like it or not, your roots are of the North Louisiana Red River, as are mine. I have not had much time for research on my paternal side (Creek, etc.). My maternal side (Choctaw/Paska Oklas) has been established since childhood. You're gonna just have to fly down for a few days to see Northwest Louisiana. Love on the South winds.

Your cousin

I had made a connection to someone on my Indian side who came to be known as my cousin in common. We had connected as cousins because of my great-grandmother, Clara Hyams Staten. There is a bond between that side of my ancestry because now for the first time, I realized I was a Native American first before all the others I would discover. I felt proud to be among this group of people. This was where my Indian ancestor came from.

At that point of finding out about my Choctaw Indian side, one night I began searching again for more information. Searching for all of this information to me became addictive. There were times I just couldn't wait to gain more knowledge about Indian tribes.

I logged on to a website with the Oklahoma Indians in Oklahoma and searched for more facts about this culture. I noticed there were thousands of Indian people looking for their ancestors and searching for the answer to their lineage lines. I had to stop on one name of which I knew I could be of help. This was a young Choctaw Indian looking for information regarding his great-grandmother and wanted to know her roll number. My heart jumped with joy because I was about to give this young man the answer to him searching for someone to help him. With the information he supplied, I emailed him back his answer and hoped he would receive it. It was my way of thanking my Great-grandmother Clara for being who she was and perhaps wanting a grandchild to know where he or she came from.

What I said to this young Indian boy with his email address was I had in my possession the Dawes Commission books and the roll number was xxxx. It says she was seven years old at the time of enrollment FULL Choctaw and the census number was xxxx.

On April 18, 2005, which is one of my grandparents' birthdays, he sent me an email and what it said was as follows:

Hello,

I don't think I know you, but I am a Choctaw Indian and was trying to get my great-granny or my great-great-granny's roll number. How did you know I was trying to find out? How did you get my email address 'cause this is a trip, you emailing information about it?

Sincerely,

XXXXXX XXXX

I cried the rest of the night. I was so elated to have helped another one of my cousins in common at that time.

Another research fantasy I had was to find out just where my great-grandmother Clara Hyams Staten was buried. Searching for this information should have been relatively easy, so I thought. There was no one here to give me this information because of the length of time gone by, and no one I talked to could remember that, either.

Determined to find her and give honor to her, I began again, searching for the last known state in which she resided, and that was Texas. This is where my Grandmother Izora, one of her daughters, was born, along with other family members. I phoned around and got some information on her mother's burial site.

On some papers my Grandfather Andrew Slade wrote on, it showed my Grandmother Izora was christened at the Bethlehem Church in Panola County, Texas. I knew this was where they were married on May 6, 1917, which meant she was a child growing up there in Texas. I came across a cemetery in Panola County called the Bethlehem Cemetery, which even showed the photo of the burial grounds. I said to myself, *This has to be where she is.*

I obtained the phone number from one of the funeral homes there in Texas, and lo and behold, one of the directors knew of the Staten families but couldn't remember my great-grandmother's information. She gave me the phone number of the caretaker of the grounds, a Mr. John Williams, and I phoned him and gave him the information on my great-grandmother, Clara Staten. I had to explain why I was searching for her and I was the great-granddaughter of this family.

Mr. Williams stated he had been the groundkeeper there for a number of years and there were probably about three hundred or more gravesites located on the premises behind the Bethlehem Church in Deadwood, Texas. He remembered seeing some gravesites of the Staten families there and would see what he could find out for me.

On February 1, 2006, I received a phone call from the caretaker of the cemetery grounds, Mr. John Williams, in DeBerry, Texas. He called me back and confirmed my request. He said after searching in certain areas of rows where he remembered seeing this name of Staten, he pulled back some brush from a headstone in that cemetery, and there she was. My great-grandmother, Clara Hyams Staten, had passed away on January 18, 1943.

I felt empowered in my faith to know where she had been all of my life. Now I could share that information with the others in our family who didn't know where she was. The family



*Clara Hyams Staten, born October 28, 1875, in Louisiana.
Died January 17, 1943, in Texas.*

hadn't migrated very far. They were approximately forty-five minutes from Shreveport, Louisiana, where the land allotment in Caddo Parish was located.

There was also one cousin from my mother's side of the family who remembered a cousin named Ben Hyams. When she was a young child, she would go to visit him with her mother, whose name was Isabella. She recalled this was the son still living at that time. As folklore went, my great-grandmother had a brother, whose name was also Benjamin Hyams, as well as a couple of half-sisters.

After learning where my great-grandmother, Clara Hyams Staten, was buried, surely I could find out where her father, my great-great-grandfather, Ben Hyams, was buried also. Locating the information needed for his record on *Ancestry.com*, I wrote to the State of Louisiana, the Secretary of State, the Division of Archives, Records Management and History, and obtained his death certificate sent out from there to me on February 2, 2006.

The place of death showed him to still be living in Caddo Parish, Shreveport, Louisiana. He lived in a town called Caspiana, Louisiana, and his birthplace was that of Natchitoches. He was a farmer for approximately ninety-four years. He was also widowed and died around the age of one hundred five.

The cause of death indicated cardiac failure, and contributory factors related to this were a medical term called dropsy. The date of death stated September 6, 1939, and was filed on September 7, 1939. Not known at the time of death were his parents' names and places of birth. He was probably unable to remember any of this, and I cannot tell if anyone was living with him or where he was at the time he died. How remarkable was this. I had learned how he passed away and his approximate age of death since he was born around the year of 1840 in Mississippi.

Now I felt complete again, knowing my roots of this ancestor from the Five Civilized Tribes. I was turning back the history pages of a time before my existence to understand who these ancestors were, what they were doing, and where they had gone. I had searched for my great-grandmother, Clara, and her families to be able to pass down all of this information for our future generations. It had to be recorded now. I had found what the Indians noted as one's place in the circle of life. Now I understand this part of my life within the circle of the Choctaw Tribe of Indians from which this ancestor comes.

Chapter Four

SLADE: ENGLAND, THE PHENOMENON

In July 1964, I began working for the International Harvester Company, located in Richmond, California. This parts distribution center was one of eleven or twelve PDCs located throughout the United States and Canada at that time. Folklore tells me this company was ranked seventh in the industry in the United States when I started working there a little more than a year after my high school graduation from the Harry Ells High School, also located in Richmond, California. I had just turned nineteen years old at that time and felt very fortunate to be working for this company until my retirement in September 1997.

International Harvester Company had been in operation with three divisions of equipment and had manufacturing plants located throughout the United States. Where I worked, the territory Richmond covered supplied parts to these three divisions, which included the CE division, for construction manufacturing units; the FE division, for farming equipment units; and the TE division, for our truck equipment units. The parts distribution centers were responsible for supplying all three of these divisions' dealerships with service parts to their customers.

Cyrus McCormick, the founder of the International Harvester Company, was born February 15, 1809, in Rockridge County, Virginia. As an American industrialist and inventor, he was instrumental in the development of the mechanical reaper. In about July 1831, he had been experimenting with various parts of machinery and had developed a prototype that would cut and harvest the wheat fields that could be raked up and tied by hand.

In 1847 McCormick settled in Chicago, Illinois, and began building a factory to produce these reapers. He produced a vast fortune in the production of these machinery units and became a wealthy man. He died on May 13, 1884, in Chicago, Illinois. I visited the company's headquarters in Chicago on a vacation year in 1979. At that time, their headquarters were located on Michigan Avenue in close proximity to the newspaper office of the *Chicago Tribune*, where my sister, Karen Wise Love, worked.

It would be in the month of October heading toward the end of the year 2005 that after relishing in what I had found out about myself regarding my Irish and Indian ancestry, I decided to take a break and just enjoy the moment. I had relocated to the country after I had retired from

Navistar International, formerly the International Harvester Company, in September 1997 to write the memoirs about my life.

After watching "Roots," which aired in January 1977, it inspired me, like many others who viewed this historical program, to leave behind some written documents. For me it was journals about my life for the future generations of descendants to know about regarding those who were here before me. I started writing a journal in the year 1981 and continued through the year 1997, when I retired.

Where I live, it is considered to be part of the greenbelt of California, which is mainly farmland. I did relocate to an area in the upper part of Northern California, which is not far from the state capital of Sacramento, in a community of about seven hundred fifty people. It is a very small community compared to other country settings I know of. It was here I had hoped to write a book about my memoirs not knowing at that time how to put all of this into context.

I can't exactly say why I really never got myself initiated to begin to write the story of my life. I had just spent the years after my working career leading up to this point enjoying living in the country and watching my grandchildren, Tramare and Talayna, grow up into adulthood.

Going into town, one could take the back country roads and enjoy farming at its very best. Not being a country girl living in the Bay area, where you could see on a clear day the city of San Francisco and the Bay Bridge, I got to see the corn, wheat, alfalfa, watermelon, honeydew melons, beets, onions, sweet potatoes, and garlic, rice, and mustard fields growing at different times during the year. Cotton, to my surprise, in this area has been growing here also. I had never seen a bale of cotton before in my life. There are orchards of fruit trees—lemon, orange, peach, pear, and apple—and orchards of walnuts and almond trees growing here also.

I could see some of the farm machinery, now owned by Case International, our parts department in Richmond, California, supplied our farmers with to help cultivate the earth and for harvesting their crops. Going home from the town of Woodland, California, taking the freeway, I remembered one time counting just how many of our international trucks were traveling on the road carrying part of our nation's commerce. Part of my job working for this company each day was to fill the supply orders to our dealers' customers, who needed the parts the farmers and the other divisions comprised of the company I worked for, needed with their out-of-service machinery.

This was the life for me. I got to see and understand how Mother Nature worked at her very best. Since I had discovered the previous two ancestors, Hyams and Wise, were also farmers, when I went into town, which took about twenty minutes going on the back roads, one could visualize their connection to the earth as farmers while earning a living for their families.

Instead of slaves working out in the fields, I could see our farm machinery units, which had replaced most of that era. What this area along with other farming communities have working in the fields now are mostly Mexican immigrant families earning a living and using man's modern technology of machinery.

What I found most interesting, because I had never lived in the country before, was after a field had produced its crop of corn, wheat, melons, etc., for the season, what was going to be

growing in its place with the next oncoming season. This I enjoyed the nine years I've spent here so far. It was also the ideal place for me to concentrate on writing a book in a peaceful and serene setting.

One year I had a deck built on the back of the house that had a patio swing along with other amenities of making life enjoyable. I lived on an acre of land. Planted on the land were fruitless mulberry and Italian cypress trees along with the oleander plants that draped along the fence lines. Plenty of grass was also planted from the front of the house to the back, and I had just settled in for my retirement years.

I had written a letter to my mother, Elsie, and to some other members of her family still living here in California. I told them I would be starting on the search for the Slade ancestor the following year. On October 30, 2005, however, I decided to go back to *Ancestry.com* just to see what Slades were in what areas in the early settlement years of the colonial times with the formation of the United States.

When I began searching for the name of "Slade" in certain states, what came up was a multitude of Slades nestled in the state of North Carolina. I went through several census years with that name in that state to see who was living there. One record I viewed showed me the name of a man whose first name was Andy Slade (short, I believed at that time, for Andrew), with a spouse whose name was Emiline Slade. They were both shown to be born in Caswell, North Carolina. This man's first name of Andy sent a chill through my body and to my sensibility. What I said to myself next was, "This gentleman has the same name as my grandfather Andrew (Andy) Slade, born in Texas."

After studying that record for a moment, I next phoned my mother to tell her about what I had discovered looking through some of the records with the surname of Slade. When I asked her if there were any Slades in our family line who might have lived in North Carolina, she replied to me that to the best of her knowledge, there wasn't. The Slades in our family line, she said, came out of Texas.

When I asked her if she knew what her grandfather's name was, however, she stated to me that his name was Lincoln Slade but said she had no knowledge of any of his brothers' or sisters' names. My first thought was to just shun this off as being a coincidence, but I saved that record and printed a copy just in case there would be more to it later on. I just had a strange feeling about this man, whose name was the same as my grandfather's, who lived in Texas.

It would be toward the middle of February 2006 that I decided to really start working on my Slade ancestry again. The holidays of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and the New Year had come and gone, and springtime was approaching again. I was ready to get back into searching for this Slade ancestor from Texas. All along, however, through the holidays and before the New Year, I felt and thought about this Andrew (Andy) Slade in North Carolina. He was listed as mulatto like my Grandfather Charlie Wise was, so I knew somehow he also was of a mixed race.

One late afternoon toward the latter part of February 2006, I pulled out that document and decided to look further into just who this Andrew (Andy) Slade was despite the fact that I was

told the Slades in our family line came out of Texas. I felt the sensation of a curious child who had laid her eyes upon something she wanted, like a piece of candy. A child, of course, wouldn't be content with her feelings of just wanting it until somehow she would figure out how to get it. I was just as curious as to why this man in Caswell, North Carolina, had a similar first name like my Grandfather Andy Slade.

My Grandfather Andrew (Andy) Slade was born to Lincoln Slade and Ellen Burns. He was born on April 18, 1898 in Texas. Their home in 1900 was in Breckenridge Springs, Panola County, Texas. My grandfather's siblings were Fred Slade, born around 1886; Lincoln Slade Jr., born around 1887; Priscilla Slade, born around 1889; Eli Slade, born around 1890; Isaac Slade, born around 1892; Ethel Slade, born around 1893; Raymond Slade, born around 1894; Richard Slade, born around 1899; Mattie Slade, born around 1901; David Slade, born around 1903; and Nellie Slade, born around 1905. Nellie Slade is the only living member of this side of the Slade family today.

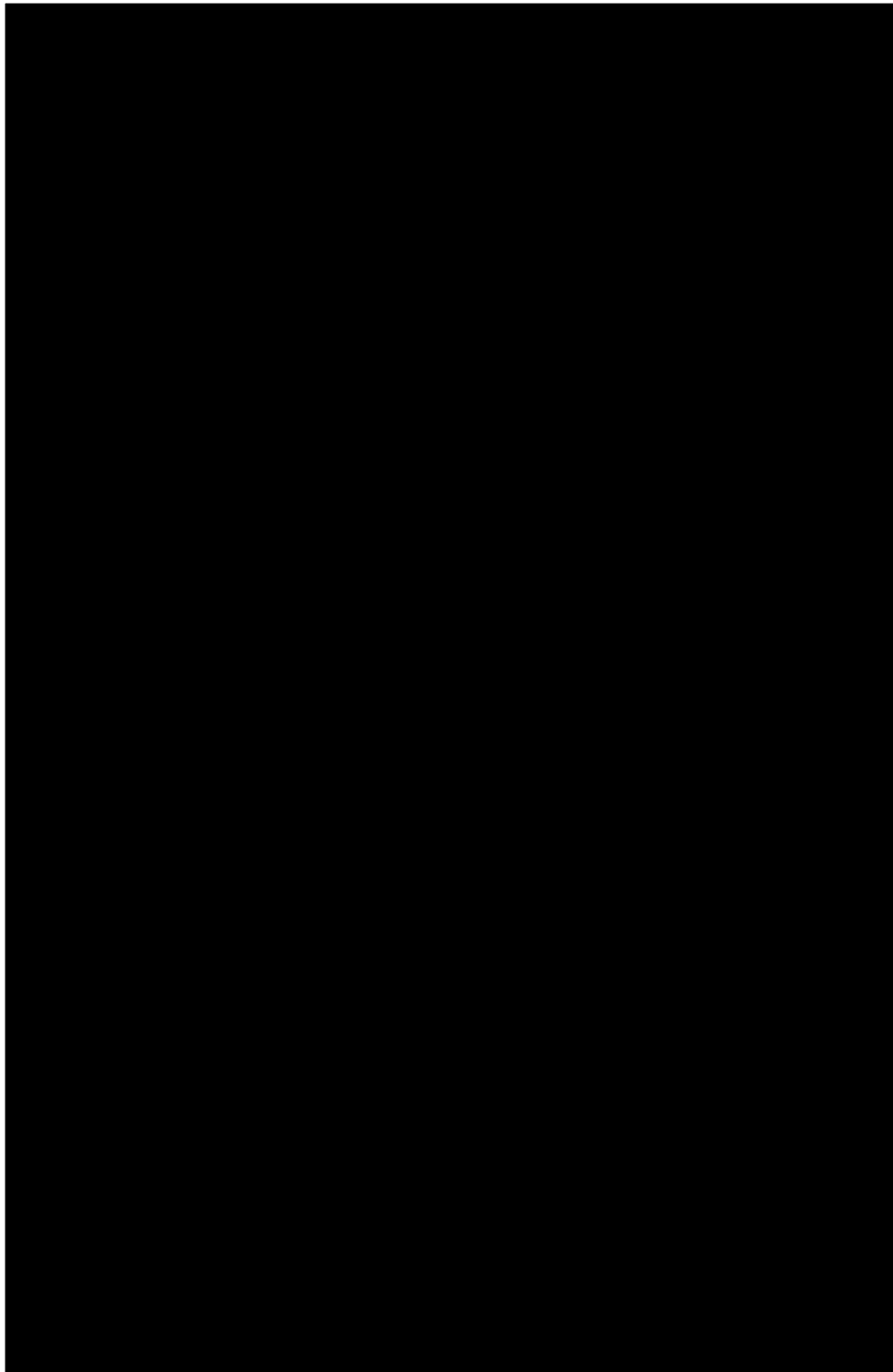
My Grandfather Andrew Slade's father, Lincoln Slade, was born on April 16, 1865, in Texas, and his mother, Ellen Burns Slade, was born on January 7, 1866, in Texas also. They were married in Panola County, Texas, on May 2, 1884.

On March 9, 2006, there would come forth a truth that even I could not deny and one could envision to be revelation or a phenomenon. On March 9, 2006, my grandson, Tramare, just happened to be on television regarding his school's lunch nutrition program. He had gotten up early to be on camera when the news van came to their school that day. Everyone in our family was excited that he was on television, and we were all exchanging phone calls to each other. Tramare's grandmother, Barbara, and great-grandmother, Elsie, phoned me that morning overzealous with seeing their grandson on television.

Several days later, in March, while having more questions to ask than answers given to me regarding Emiline, I decided to make a phone call back to my mother's cousin, Westley Slade, on March 14, 2006. He had given me some information regarding Emiline Slade earlier. Emiline's mother, Polly, was an immigrant also. What was told to me was that Polly, Emiline's mother, might have possibly come out of Wales in England. I wanted to know more about her and her family.

With my phone call that day, however, there was something Westley Slade wanted to tell me. I learned from our phone conversation that on March 9, 2006, he said he had been listening to a television program earlier that evening from another room in his home and couldn't get out of mind what he had heard.

Westley stated to me that a man from England, whose name was Slade, was on television. This Englishman was telling his story of being the only ancestor left, the seventh Baronet, a member of a British hereditary order of honor, regarding a castle in England. The Slade Baronetcy was created on September 30th of 1831 in the Baronetage of the United Kingdom, with the following showing as Slade Baronets of Maunsell Grange, Somerset, England. Sir John Slade, 1st Baronet, Sir Fredrick William Slade, 2nd Baronet, Sir Alfred Frederic Adolphus Slade, 3rd Baronet, Sir Culhbert Slade, 4th Baronet, Sir Alfred Fotheringham Slade, 5th Baronet and Sir Michael Nial Slade, the 6th Baronet.



Lincoln Slade, born April 16, 1865, in Texas, died June 16, 1918, in Texas.

He was trying to find the ancestor or ancestors along his family line of Slades. It had to be a male Slade descendant and preferably a rich one. The Slade Castle was worth about thirteen million dollars. Evidently to my knowledge, Sir Benjamin Slade had commissioned someone over here in the United States to help him find this ancestor, with him submitting his DNA.

I told Westley Slade I hadn't heard anything regarding this news program on a Sir Benjamin Slade in England. Since I had searched for other information about my ancestors, I would also take time to find out just what this was all about. The only reason Westley was taken back on what Sir Benjamin Slade of England was saying that day had to do with my phone call back to him a few weeks earlier. I told him and other family members it was my belief our ancestor Andy Slade was showing coming from Caswell, North Carolina, with Emiline Fugua, his wife.

Later toward the end of March 2006, I found a link to a Slade Castle in Somerset, England, on the Internet. After reading about the Slades on this website, I saw noted on it were also some pictures of Slade ancestors in a photo album one could view. Curious to see the faces of these people, I scrolled down on the pages of this website. I stopped, however, on an icon of a man whose name was William Slade.

I remembered searching his information on *Ancestry.com*, starting with the first census year of 1790 to 1840, where he dropped off. He lived in Yanceyville, Caswell, North Carolina, and owned slaves. I had found a slave named Andrew (Andy) Slade listed as mulatto and born there in the year 1813 under the 1850 slave database. Where I discovered Andy Slade listed, it showed the owner as A. Slade.

I had already summarized in my own mind that perhaps Andy (Andrew) might have been a runaway from North Carolina. I found out Andrew had left with Emiline Fugua, born there around 1828. They both had left North Carolina in 1860, or perhaps I will say during the winter months of 1860.

The next census year of 1870, Emiline had given birth to her first son, born in Louisiana in 1861. Emiline's second son was born in 1863 there also. Her third son, my great-grandfather, Lincoln Slade, was born in 1865 in Texas, from where my family members only knew this family line of Slades to come.

Only viewing the small icon picture of William Slade at first, I had already gleamed something odd about his face when I went to enlarge the picture of him. When the computer monitor showed his picture in full view before me, what my eyes said to my conscious mind next was, *Why am I looking at my mother's face!* Then it dawned on me. I was looking at my mother, Elsie's, face right here in the United States.

With my heart racing and my head somewhat spinning, I took off my glasses and got up out of my chair. I suddenly felt the sensation of wanting to pass out, but somehow I managed to leave my computer monitor and the room. Trembling with disbelief, I started crying and said out loud, "No, God, no! This can't be true! No, God, no!"

Of all the wonders of the world that can happen to a person, this one went beyond anything imaginable in one's lifetime. I was pacing the floor, going 'round and 'round with disbelief that



Elsie Slade, born November 7, 1921, to Andrew Slade and Izora Staten Slade.

I saw my mother's face on this man. Out of nowhere and without any knowledge of this Slade ancestor, this picture of him appeared before my eyes.

I was unable to sleep that night. Had I been dreaming or living in another dimension of time? Never ever had I expected this ancestor to appear before me seemingly out of nowhere. Here again, my thoughts on uncovering this ancestor went back to what Eleanor "Gypsy" Wyatt made her comment on regarding her ancestors, and she quoted, "Thus to fulfill these desires of my descendants, I create this page in hope that somewhere, sometime, and somehow or someplace, they will find it. They will know where they came from."

The next day, I sent a printed copy of William Slade to my mother. After receiving that printed copy a few days later, she confirmed it was indeed true. That confirmed statement she made over the phone left me speechless. I couldn't control what I wanted to say next as we continued to talk. There was no way I would have guessed her to say this was our ancestor and part of our beginning here many years ago.

He looked almost the spitting image of her, especially when she was younger. How could this be? I felt so confused about what I saw that night and said to myself Sir Benjamin Slade was looking for someone over here in the United States. Wouldn't England have kept track of their family's lineage lines, or was there one out there that couldn't be accounted for? Were we the missing link? Unfortunately because of the program my grandson just happened to be on that morning of March 9, 2006, I missed Sir Benjamin Slade's quest for help from the public.

This ancestor had left behind his blueprint on my mother, Elsie Slade. There were probably other descendants before her who could make this claim regarding some other family member, but their time to discover this wasn't the time to tell the story of this phenomenon.

Let's go back in time, a time when this new part of the continent was being discovered by other races of people who became known as immigrants to this part of the world. Not new, of course, was what I'm told and have read about was the Five Hundred Nations of Indians who were here first.

When immigrants migrated here for different reasons during those early times, this ancestor of mine was born into the family of Thomas Slade and Hannah Miles on January 10, 1758. There were nine other siblings born into this family of Slades. William Slade was born in Baltimore, Maryland, and his family had taken him from there to grow up in North Carolina.

It is stated regarding William's family history that an ancestor, whose name was also William Slade, probably born in England, came to America before 1650. He settled on Chesapeake Bay in an area between what is now Baltimore and Annapolis, Maryland. He died before July 1676, when his will was filed in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, naming three daughters and a son, William Slade Jr. (who had two wives, two daughters, and six sons.)

Josias Slade, born in 1718, a grandson of the immigrant William, was owner of Slades' Tavern in My Lady's Manor, north of Baltimore, and served as informer during the Revolution. Many of the Slade descendants settled in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, and Harford counties of Maryland; however, some later generations migrated to North Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, and Ohio.

In 1763 Thomas Slade, born in 1722 in Maryland, another grandson of the immigrant

William, removed to North Carolina. His father-in-law, Thomas Miles, and their families accompanied him in a large group. They settled on North Prong of Rattlesnake Creek in the north part of Orange County, North Carolina, the part that later became Caswell County. Many Slade descendants are still living in that area today.

How fortunate was I to be able to understand just where this ancestor was coming from and where he grew up. Like me he had several siblings, but his environment and surroundings were obviously different than mine because slavery was only talked about in our family. We knew we were slave descendants, but just exactly where from was unknown.

This slave ancestor, my great-great-grandfather, Andrew Slade, born in 1813 in Yanceyville, Caswell, North Carolina, was so remote to me and out of sorts on my way of thinking about him when I found the English name of Slade to possibly come out of England. What did that mean to my family members and to me when I began this search?

Being known as a slave descendant, it would have meant before my search that one of my slave ancestors would have been purchased by a slave owner and continued to be a slave who was possibly even sold several times to pay off debts incurred by his masters. It wouldn't be until the Emancipation Proclamation was initiated on September 22, 1862, and signed into law on January 1, 1863, by the President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, that freeing them would be the issue.

This proclamation would set in place to free the slaves, and a Civil War would have to be fought between the Confederate Army and the Union Army before this proclamation would become law of the land. It would have never been in my wildest dreams that I would uncover the answer to this lineage line except for the search England was engaged in also.

My family members, to my knowledge, had never heard anyone in our family mention the state of North Carolina as an area from which our ancestors might have come. Andrew and Emiline, perhaps, may have never told their children of their plight for their freedom in the year 1860 to leave North Carolina because the laws that governed their lives had other consequences if they had stayed.

Upon finding them in the census year of 1870 and having an open mind at that time, my first thought was they had to leave. It was the year 1860, and the Emancipation Proclamation, coupled with the Civil War, which would eventually become the law of the land, had not been foreseen to them at that time.

Antebellum, North Carolina, and the other Southern states during the years in which both of these two descendants of mine were born, were restricted to several laws, which at that time were part of the governing body of these states regarding slaves and free whites. Emiline, a free white person, could not have a child with any person of color, especially a slave, whether black, brown, or mulatto. There were consequences to which she would have had to adhere that were severe and might have launched her into servitude. Her unborn child with whom she was pregnant also might have been sent away into an apprenticeship until he or she attained a certain age.

Andrew, on the other hand, even though he was the son of William Slade, a plantation and slave owner, and being of the mulatto race, was still handicapped. No slave owner, no matter

who he or she was, could manumit any slave during those earlier years. There were noted a few exceptions to this law, however. What that meant was no slave owner could free slaves whether they wanted to or not.

The word "love" has a powerful meaning within one's own self-worth. This word is a gift that those who chose to have its foundation used in the context of the moment or the fulfillment of its meaning will find it overbearing to resist. Andrew and Emiline would encounter just these feelings during their time together. There were these laws to restrict them from each other's love and affection. They chose to run with it instead and live out whatever time they had together because of this precious word: "love."

With a consummated marriage between my Grandfather Andrew Slade and my Grandmother Izora Staten Slade and with the year 1758 to the year 1921, which is one hundred sixty three years later, the blueprint of William Slade would be uncovered through my mother, Elsie Slade. The lives and images of William Slade continued on with his planted seed those many years ago.

Sometimes our environment dictates who we are and how we grow up into adulthood. William Slade's surroundings were that of slavery, a time that came to pass, but still it was accepted as a way of life during those earlier years in the formation of the United States. Somewhere though those years of being a slave owner and deciding from his marriage with Martha Patsy Kerr Slade, he had made a sovereign decision to sire children. His wife, Martha, was barren, unable to bear his children. If it were not for this accepted way of life, which wasn't always acceptable to African slave women, he would have been fatherless.

The will of Thomas Miles gives me the insight of how all of this may have come about. William Slade, my ancestor, would have only been about eight years old at that time. Going back in time, I believe I had found where my connection in this family might have started.

In my search, I had learned William Slade's father, Thomas Slade, born around 1717 and died April 10, 1798, and mother, Hannah Miles Slade, born around 1728 and died 1813, lived in Caswell, North Carolina. The will of Hannah's father, Thomas Miles, born around 1703 and died 1766, indicated the following:

The Will of Thomas Miles

Orange County, North Carolina—Book A, pages 48 and 49

I, Thomas Miles, of Orange County in the Province of North Carolina, being in perfect health and memory, do make ordain and constitute this, my last will and testament in manner and form following, that is to say, after my decease my just debts being paid that then I give to my wife, Hannah Miles, and all my right title and interest of seven hundred and forty acres of land, which I now live on with all, the appurtenances, thereunto belonging with all and every of the household goods and furniture and a negro boy called James, to her and her heirs forever. I also give to my wife, Hannah Miles, all the negro children Phillis shall or may have, during my wife's natural life and to her and her heirs forever. I also give to my wife, Han-

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WRITES OF MATRIMONY

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nah Miles, Adam Jeane, and Phillis, during her natural life and her decease and said Adam Jean and Phillis, shall be equally divided between Aquilla Miles and Moses Miles, with one shilling sterling to each of them and no more. I also give my son, Abraham Miles, a negro boy, Ned, and one shilling ster: and no more to him and his heirs forever. I also give to my son, Peter Miles, one negro boy called Joe and one shilling ster: and no more. I also give to my son, Jacob Miles, one negro boy called Caswell, and one shilling ster: and no more. I also give my daughter, Hannah Slade, one negro girl called Sarah, and one shilling ster: and no more. I also give to my daughter, Potteat, one negro girl called Mariah, and one shilling ster: and no more. I also revoke, renounce, and disanull other wills and testaments, that ever have been by me heretofore written. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal this 14th day of March 1766.

There were known practices within the slave masters' dwellings that female slave women or young females were often the target of what I will term being forced into relations without their consent. I believe it was one of Sarah's children, a daughter who would have been serving the household of William and Martha Slade. This Sarah would be the woman who had the duty to run the home and the everyday needs of taking care of this family.

Perhaps after understanding that his wife, Martha, couldn't bear him any children and he could see his other siblings had families, it might have been when he sought out this way to bring forth his own children, knowing they were going to be his slave children. In his circumstances, the way he might have felt about his slave children would have had a different input as to him knowing these were the only children he could sire and not be looked down upon in the community.

After all, it was commonplace that slave masters could and did sire children to increase the plantation's farm labor without having to even purchase slaves to work the land or sell off whenever circumstances needed to be rendered. The wives, of course, didn't have very much input into what the slave masters were doing with their female slaves. Some wives, of course, I can imagine, despised female slaves because their husbands, whenever they wanted to, would go to them for their sexual satisfactions.

It is my belief this was the way William Slade attained his family. Whether one could say it was right or wrong leaves little bearing on what has transpired to this day. Andrew was one of his children. I've often wondered since I discovered this was my ancestor what it was like growing up in this Slade family in North Carolina.

Thinking about this descendant Andrew, I had to challenge myself to have an open mind as to what could have happened those few hundred years ago. Just when, why, and where William Slade decided to sire our Andrew at first when I began to really concentrate on that theory led me to a possible scenario.

This scenario goes back to a war into which Andrew was born. I was a child born during World War II, which began with Japan bombing Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Andrew was

born in North Carolina, a Southern state in the County of Caswell. He became part of this family like other slave children sired from their masters, and it is my belief it was done for a different reason.

The War of 1812 led me to a possible answer. This war began on June 12, 1812, between the United States and Great Britain. The United States and Great Britain fought over disputes of some of these surrounding attributes, which were concerning the impressments of American soldiers by the British and the disputed Northwest Territories and the border with Canada. This war continued on until 1814. Andrew was born in 1813. The month is unknown to me.

With the histories of prior wars and the wars of our current world conflicts even today and with soldiers going off to foreign lands, men had to think about if they were going to survive and be able to return to their perspective lives, families, and surroundings.

Knowing perhaps there was a grave possibility of him not returning from the war and being fifty-four years old at that time and knowing his wife, Martha, was barren, one of his slave women became that person whom he would leave to go off to this war while she was pregnant. If he were to die in whatever position of his enlistment as his demise, he knew a child would be left behind for the world to know he was once here and was part of this culture of human beings.

Andrew's birth in Caswell probably took place in the Dan River Township of North Carolina. He was born in 1813 there, and the 1820 census on William Slade indicated there were two male slaves under the age of fourteen living with him. I can't say if there were other mentionable buildings, meaning slave dwellings, nearby when his mother gave birth to him. She could have been in the Slades' home when this event for his birth took place. The other male slave child could also have been a son fathered from William. My Andrew may have been the second child born to him this way.

I'd found where my descendant Andrew was, however, but how was it growing up as a slave child to this Slade family in the Dan River Township area in Caswell, North Carolina? Some questions that come to mind for me were when he would have discovered just who he was. Did his mother tell him, or did his father tell him, or was it perhaps he knew the difference just looking at his mother and other slaves there to understand he was of a different coloring and had different facial features?

There may have been another male slave child born to William who might have told him who he was. How did he feel about being different, and what relationship would he and his father have together under those circumstances? If only I knew and could feel all of this, I'd know that answer.

Those early years must have been a true test for any slave child sired this way on a plantation. Were there limitations he had to adhere to because he was mixed? Also, how did others perceive who was part of this family, especially his father's siblings and his wife, Martha?

Andrew's grandfather, Thomas Slade, was a prominent leader in the early cultivation of the Bright Leaf Tobacco. Andrew more than likely had the duty of growing the tobacco plants on the plantation when he became of age to work. There were other chores I suspect had to

be attended to growing up in this environment. He would spend nearly forty-six years in North Carolina. One would consider this going past middle age during those years. Part of his life he spent with his slave father, William. Another part was spent with Ezekiel Slade, William's younger brother, and the remainder was with Abisha Slade, Ezekiel's son. Knowing the laws regarding slaves for those who chose to run away would evidently keep him from leaving or running away until 1860.

Andrew's father, William, besides being a plantation farmer, was a soldier in the Revolutionary War and received a pension from 1833 to 1836. William Slade served as Ensign in the first North Carolina regiment and Lieutenant in the Fourth North Carolina regiment. He died on August 31, 1836. When his father was near death, were he and other family members there to say goodbye? My guess, of course, would be yes, they were. After all, this was his father, the man who gave life to him.

Does the title slaves had to call their owners—"Master Slade," for instance—before or after a name dictate whether or not one is worthy of being important enough to be recognized, especially during these times? What role does that play in one's lifetime when it comes to saying goodbye and leaving behind your loved ones? What difference would it mean to someone who is black or white? All your feelings come forth to that person, whom you will never see again. Your heart dictates to you that they will always be there. These must have been those feelings felt when his father did pass away on that fateful day. Under what aliment is unknown.

Like my Grandfather Andrew Slade, who died in a car crash on October 19, 1950, just being fifty-two years old and driven by his nephew, Emery Slade, our family members suffered his loss also. They had just finished up working in the cotton or grape fields in a nearby city outside of Fresno, California. It was the month of October, and the weather was still hot there.

There were six passengers traveling in the car on a two-lane country road going home in the evening hour behind a bus. Emery Slade, the driver, had tried to pass the bus up ahead but discovered that while trying to pass it up, he had lost control of the car in which they were traveling, which was a 1937 Ford. This vehicle had a front seat, which seated three of them, and a trunk-type seat for the other three passengers in the back that one could fold up or down. Emery and Marvin Slade, nephews of my grandfather's, and another passenger were in the front seat. My Grandfather Andrew was riding in the middle in the back seat with two other passengers going home that day from the farming fields.

Emery, after determining he couldn't pass up the bus to get ahead of it, lost control and the vehicle crashed into a pole. My Grandfather Andrew, being the one in the middle in the back seat, was crushed to death. Pulling my grandfather out of the back seat, Emery and Marvin were unharmed and laid my Grandfather Andrew on the ground. He had succumbed to a broken neck. Emery and Marvin Slade were both shaken with disbelief on what had just happened.

When the word of his tragic death reached my grandmother, his wife, Izora, and the rest of the family, shock is the only word I can implement as the reaction of our loss. At that time, I was only five years old and living with my mother and three other siblings in Richmond, California.

My mother didn't have a phone. A neighbor across the street had befriended her, and my Grandmother Izora could always reach my mother on this neighbor's phone.

My mother stated that on that fateful day, a phone call came in from Fresno, and it was her mother, crying and crying uncontrollably. My mother knew then something was urgently wrong. Her father had passed away just hours before. My mother, Elsie, felt the loss of her father so deeply, it would be the first and last funeral she would ever attend and that was with her father's death.

There was a brother named Vernon Slade, the second child born to this family, who took the death of his father even deeper. Internment for my Grandfather Andrew Slade was at the Mountain View Cemetery in Fresno, California, but it was at Cooley's Funeral Home in Fresno that Vernon just couldn't break himself away from the loss of his father. He went there every day and stayed for hours just sitting with him after work. He would break down with grief until he himself had become weakened in spirit and had to be comforted both by his wife and mother when he went home.

My mother states we left Richmond a few days before the funeral and took the AT&T train from the station in Richmond, California, to attend the funeral. I can't remember that train ride, but I do remember the church where the services were held.

My grandfather and grandmother never attended the same churches. He belonged to the Methodist faith, and she belonged to the Baptist faith. That had never posed a problem for them in their marriage. This part of their faith was respected between the two of them.

The funeral was held at Carter Memorial, my grandfather's church, about a week later. Like most services, all family members who were notified had to have time to make their arrangements to attend. My Grandmother Izora had to be under the doctor's care and sedated until that day when she would have to say goodbye to her marriage mate. They had spent thirty-three years together taking their vows until death do us part, and now that time had come.

I believe because his death was not of natural causation and was an accident, the outcome of this tragedy was so overwhelming to everyone in the family that it took many years to recover from the way he died on that day. My Grandmother Izora never remarried again.

My mother, Elsie, was the spitting image of her father, Andrew, also. Perhaps one could say she saw herself lying there in that casket. Because she loved him dearly, she couldn't, after the funeral services, bear to attend another one to this day. She never attended any of her sisters' or her brother's funerals or even her own mother's funeral when the hand of God called them in one by one.

What I can remember as a young child of five years old was I had never seen so many people before in one place, and at that time I had no idea it was a funeral. I can recall my family members all sitting in the front rows of the church, and with me being restless like children of that age were, I could see people crying out with grief. I still couldn't understand why they were doing all of this.

When they weren't looking, being curious again, I decided to leave my seat. To this day, I can remember very distinctly going up to my grandfather's casket and trying to climb inside,



*My Grandfather Andrew Slade, born April 18, 1898,
in Texas, died October 19, 1950, in California.*

saying to him, "Papa, Papa, Papa, wake up. Wake up, Papa." A church nurse or usher came up to the casket and removed me from where I was back to someone in the family.

The church nurses there were trying to comfort members of this family, whose grief had overtaken them for the moment. Not knowing anything about prejudices, I could see other people who were white there at the funeral. Later in my life, when my mother would talk about her father's death, she told me my Grandfather Andrew worked as a farmer on a strawberry farm there in Fresno and his employer and their families were there. This employer loved and respected my grandfather and even shared in the family's sorrow on that day of even his loss as one of the best workers he had employed at his establishment.

There was no will of Andrew's father, William Slade, filed in any court papers in Caswell, North Carolina. The property went to his wife, Martha Patsy Kerr Slade, in a will book filed in Caswell County. A reference showed Martha named her nieces and nephews and the children of Sicily Gooch Hightower as recipients of whatever property they had owned together. There was no way she could name any of her husband's slave children. She died in Caswell in 1850.

Following Andrew's trail as best I could, I saw he was never sold off but stayed with the Slade families. With his father gone, I learned he possibly went over to the family side of Ezekiel "Lin" Slade and continued living and working there on the plantations. Ezekiel, as mentioned before, was a younger brother of William's, and since Andrew couldn't be manumitted from being a slave, the only other alternative was to stay there with the rest of his family members. This was why in the 1850 slave database, Andrew showed to be with Abisha Slade, Ezekiel's son. The census for that year had not been taken to show Andrew with Ezekiel's slaves because Ezekiel Slade had died in January 1850, before the census was taken.

The problem some slave descendants are having today is trying to find a paper trail. For me the paper trail was practically nonexistent except for what my Grandfather Andrew Slade had written on a separate page behind his marriage papers.

He had listed all of his children's names and birth dates and wrote the names of his nearest descendants, not knowing entirely even how their names were spelled. If it were not for his forethought or the family practice to record this bit of information, I could not to this day tell you about this ancestor.

Farming was, of course, the main agricultural business that was supplied by slave labor throughout the Southern states. There were other crops grown there in North Carolina, but like many farming units, tobacco was one of the main crop in which most of the farmers engaged their slave labor.

When I found Andrew in the 1850 slave database under the slave owner's name of A. Slade, I had no idea who this owner was. I found out A. Slade stood for Abisha Slade, also noted as Captain A. Slade, and he was a tobacco farmer. Andrew was probably an active participant not only in planting young tobacco seedlings but also in the process used then in curing them. Slaves would probably take turns or shifts in tobacco barns for this curing process.

Andrew resided in the Dan River Township of North Carolina. As a child growing up in this area, just what were his surroundings like? My search led me to a town called Purley in

Family History

Children

Children	Date		Age		Sex
	Year	Month	Year	Month	
1. <i>John</i>	<i>1845</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1845</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
2. <i>John</i>	<i>1846</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1846</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
3. <i>John</i>	<i>1847</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1847</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
4. <i>John</i>	<i>1848</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1848</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
5. <i>John</i>	<i>1849</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1849</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
6. <i>John</i>	<i>1850</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1850</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
7. <i>John</i>	<i>1851</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1851</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
8. <i>John</i>	<i>1852</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1852</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
9. <i>John</i>	<i>1853</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1853</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
10. <i>John</i>	<i>1854</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1854</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
11. <i>John</i>	<i>1855</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1855</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
12. <i>John</i>	<i>1856</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1856</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
13. <i>John</i>	<i>1857</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1857</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
14. <i>John</i>	<i>1858</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1858</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
15. <i>John</i>	<i>1859</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1859</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
16. <i>John</i>	<i>1860</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1860</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
17. <i>John</i>	<i>1861</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1861</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
18. <i>John</i>	<i>1862</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1862</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
19. <i>John</i>	<i>1863</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1863</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
20. <i>John</i>	<i>1864</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1864</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
21. <i>John</i>	<i>1865</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1865</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
22. <i>John</i>	<i>1866</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1866</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
23. <i>John</i>	<i>1867</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1867</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
24. <i>John</i>	<i>1868</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1868</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
25. <i>John</i>	<i>1869</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1869</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
26. <i>John</i>	<i>1870</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1870</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
27. <i>John</i>	<i>1871</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1871</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
28. <i>John</i>	<i>1872</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1872</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
29. <i>John</i>	<i>1873</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1873</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
30. <i>John</i>	<i>1874</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1874</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
31. <i>John</i>	<i>1875</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1875</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
32. <i>John</i>	<i>1876</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1876</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
33. <i>John</i>	<i>1877</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1877</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
34. <i>John</i>	<i>1878</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1878</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
35. <i>John</i>	<i>1879</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1879</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
36. <i>John</i>	<i>1880</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1880</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
37. <i>John</i>	<i>1881</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1881</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
38. <i>John</i>	<i>1882</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1882</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
39. <i>John</i>	<i>1883</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1883</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
40. <i>John</i>	<i>1884</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1884</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
41. <i>John</i>	<i>1885</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1885</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
42. <i>John</i>	<i>1886</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1886</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
43. <i>John</i>	<i>1887</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1887</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
44. <i>John</i>	<i>1888</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1888</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
45. <i>John</i>	<i>1889</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1889</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
46. <i>John</i>	<i>1890</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1890</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
47. <i>John</i>	<i>1891</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1891</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
48. <i>John</i>	<i>1892</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1892</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
49. <i>John</i>	<i>1893</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1893</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
50. <i>John</i>	<i>1894</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1894</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
51. <i>John</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
52. <i>John</i>	<i>1896</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1896</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
53. <i>John</i>	<i>1897</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1897</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
54. <i>John</i>	<i>1898</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1898</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
55. <i>John</i>	<i>1899</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1899</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
56. <i>John</i>	<i>1900</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1900</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
57. <i>John</i>	<i>1901</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1901</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
58. <i>John</i>	<i>1902</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1902</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
59. <i>John</i>	<i>1903</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1903</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
60. <i>John</i>	<i>1904</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1904</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
61. <i>John</i>	<i>1905</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1905</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
62. <i>John</i>	<i>1906</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1906</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
63. <i>John</i>	<i>1907</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1907</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
64. <i>John</i>	<i>1908</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1908</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
65. <i>John</i>	<i>1909</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1909</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
66. <i>John</i>	<i>1910</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1910</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
67. <i>John</i>	<i>1911</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1911</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
68. <i>John</i>	<i>1912</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1912</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
69. <i>John</i>	<i>1913</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1913</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
70. <i>John</i>	<i>1914</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1914</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
71. <i>John</i>	<i>1915</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1915</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
72. <i>John</i>	<i>1916</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1916</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
73. <i>John</i>	<i>1917</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1917</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
74. <i>John</i>	<i>1918</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1918</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
75. <i>John</i>	<i>1919</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1919</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
76. <i>John</i>	<i>1920</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1920</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
77. <i>John</i>	<i>1921</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1921</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
78. <i>John</i>	<i>1922</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1922</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
79. <i>John</i>	<i>1923</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1923</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
80. <i>John</i>	<i>1924</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1924</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
81. <i>John</i>	<i>1925</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1925</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
82. <i>John</i>	<i>1926</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1926</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
83. <i>John</i>	<i>1927</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1927</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
84. <i>John</i>	<i>1928</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1928</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
85. <i>John</i>	<i>1929</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1929</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
86. <i>John</i>	<i>1930</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1930</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
87. <i>John</i>	<i>1931</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1931</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
88. <i>John</i>	<i>1932</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1932</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
89. <i>John</i>	<i>1933</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1933</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
90. <i>John</i>	<i>1934</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1934</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
91. <i>John</i>	<i>1935</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1935</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
92. <i>John</i>	<i>1936</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1936</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
93. <i>John</i>	<i>1937</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1937</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
94. <i>John</i>	<i>1938</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1938</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
95. <i>John</i>	<i>1939</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1939</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
96. <i>John</i>	<i>1940</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1940</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
97. <i>John</i>	<i>1941</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1941</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
98. <i>John</i>	<i>1942</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1942</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
99. <i>John</i>	<i>1943</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1943</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>
100. <i>John</i>	<i>1944</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1944</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>

Slade family history births recorded by my grandfather Andrew Slade.

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the north-central part of the county, and it is noted as the source of the earliest bright-leaf tobacco.

The community developed along the Yanceyville-Danville plank road when it became a stagecoach stop. Tradition relates that the name evolved because of Samuel Satterwhite Harrison's home built before 1846 atop a hill and painted a gleaming white color. From a distance, it appeared to be a "pearly white" house. Purley had at one time a doctor; Cobb & Davis operated both a sawmill and a gristmill here in the late nineteenth century, and there were several churches in the community.

Those traveling between Yanceyville and Danville went through Purley. First the road was dirt, and then a plank road was constructed. The old road follows the contour of the land, curves, and twists up and down until arriving at the North Carolina-Virginia state line. Purley, along with Blanche and Providence, make up what is called the Dan River Community.

It was well known that the first bright-leaf tobacco was flue-cured in the vicinity of Purley on the land owned by Abisha Slade, the actual curing being done by Stephen Slade, a colored slave. The barn in which the first curing was carried out still stands on the Tom Harrison farm. They called the leaf "golden," for it brought many a coin into the pockets of those who raised, cured, and marketed it.

It was purely by accident that on one rainy night on Abisha Slade's plantation in 1839, one of his slaves, Stephen Slade, unintentionally fell asleep. He awoke to find the fire in the tobacco barn was going out and ran to a nearby blacksmith's shop. He came back and placed some charred coals on the fire before it went out. The result of this incident was the new method of curing the golden leaf tobacco.

When the smoke cleared in the tobacco barn, Abisha saw the tobacco leaves had turned this golden leaf color. He probably was in awe of what had just happened. Abisha Slade, assisted by brothers William and Elias, developed the process of flue-curing tobacco, which brought about a revolution in the tobacco industry.

With this new discovery, such firms as those of R.J. Reynolds, Julian S. Carr, and the Dukes were formed. Perfecting the process of curing the tobacco this way revolutionized the way the world would use the method for this curing process.

Abisha Slade and others became prominent and wealthy farmers in what was known then in Caswell as the "Boom Era" and made this county very wealthy. Abisha Slade also served Caswell as Clerk of the Court from 1841 to 1854.

Caswell, North Carolina, was also a town of many prominent men. The founder of the town was named after the governor, Richard Caswell, in 1777 as being Caswell's first governor. There were many prominent leaders in Caswell of that era, which included Bartlett Yancey, a member of the United States House of Representatives; Bedford Brown, a United States senator; John Kerr, a congressman and Baptist minister; Azariah and Solomon Graves, justices of the court; and Calvin Graves, a lawyer and speaker at one time. They served at the General Assembly of the House in Caswell, North Carolina.

Noted also living in Caswell, Milton Township, was Thomas Day, a free black slave who was

born around 1801 in Virginia. It's stated Day came to Milton around 1823. He was a cabinet maker and made sofas; various chairs of all kinds; stools; beds, especially daybeds; chests; sideboards; architectural structures of many entryways and archways; and staircase stairways of the Antebellum era. Some of this architecture was built by Day in the homes of some of Caswell's prominent leaders during those years.

Alex Haley's slave descendants are also noted to be residing in Caswell. Haley traced one of his slave descendants to Caswell and wrote in his book *Roots* that a slave master named Tom Lea was the slave master to his slave descendant "Kizzy," and her son, "Chicken George," was a son sired from Lea. The Slade and Lea families are noted living in some instances side by side in Caswell on some census reports.

Could my slave descendant Andrew and Alex Haley's slave descendants have known each other? Quite possibly they did, depending on how close their masters' plantations were and where they were living at that time. I had no idea even this connection to this famous author and historian would have a connection to where my slave descendant Andrew was living.

Abisha Slade, I read, shared this new method of how to cure and perfect the golden leaf tobacco and shared wealth in its glory. The "Boom Era," from 1840 to 1860, for many plantation farmers growing tobacco also called them the "good tobacco man." Abisha Slade also gave to his slave, Stephen, a farm where it is said Stephen is buried.

Stephen was born also around 1813 and died around 1906. Abisha Slade was born on September 15, 1799, and died in 1869 in Caswell, North Carolina. Abisha died in poverty after the Civil War ended, when the emancipated slaves left from North Carolina to start lives of their own.

I can't say just when and where Andrew met and ran off with my great-great-grandmother, Emiline Fugua, but I do believe she may have been a seamstress like her sister, Betsy, as noted on the census. She was still at home and not married in 1850. It could have been she and her sister made clothes for the slaves and did fittings for these prominent families in Caswell. Andrew, not being with Abisha Slade's family until perhaps after his father, Ezekiel, died in January 1850, as a slave, may have met Emiline under those circumstances.

Another thought was Andrew might have been one of the Slades' slaves who drove the carriage, attended the care of their horses, and took the families back and forth from the surrounding townships of Milton, Leasburg, Danville, Hightowers, Anderson, Stony Creek, Locust Hill, and Pelham. Driving them back and forth to attend church services may also have been something for which he was responsible as being part of their household.

Fearing the worst upon learning she was pregnant, Andrew and Emiline left North Carolina. They probably left in the winter months of 1860, and perhaps in their way of thinking of escaping and hunted as runaways, their trail might not have been as traceable. Abisha, knowing this was his uncle's slave son and, in the eyes of God, his first cousin, may have given him his best wishes upon leaving. I can only feel in my heart that Abisha wouldn't have wanted any harm to come to Andrew or Emiline.

Emiline's mother, Polly, knowing what had taken place, probably went into shock and fear, knowing she had to let go of one of her daughters this way. The alternatives if they had stayed

would not only have brought havoc and embarrassment to their families but their lives as well. After all, they were not young people anymore. Andrew would have been about forty-six or forty-seven years old, and Emiline would have been about thirty-three. Time had passed them by very quickly, and whatever they had to endure to be with each other, this was the time they had to make their escape into Louisiana.

In 1860 Louisiana was under French rule. The populace rules were more liberal. They were also in Indian territory, and other mixed races of people made way there as an escape from other territories, especially the South. Once there in Louisiana, they probably had no problem blending in escaping from slavery. They were probably able to blend in as "free people of color," part of a mixed community.

Most Indian tribes were exempt from these types of conditions, although there were slave owners with slaves working there in Louisiana also. Free to move about as one wanted to them must have been an overwhelming feeling after they had settled in. Since farming was what he knew growing up in North Carolina, I'm sure this was where he found work. Louisiana farmers in the early to mid 1800s were growing two main crops. They were sugarcane and cotton. Rice was also grown there, especially as for a food source for their slave population.

Andrew and Emiline's first son was born sometime there in 1861, and his name was Dawson Slade. They had another son who would be born there also in 1863, and his name was Scott Slade. Just how and when their decision was made to leave Louisiana was made before their next son, my great-grandfather, Lincoln Slade, was born in Texas on April 16, 1865.

What this tells me with no doubt in my mind is that my great-grandfather, Lincoln, was named after President Abraham Lincoln, whose attempted and successful assassination took place on April 14, 1865, by John Wilkes Booth at the Ford Theater in Virginia. President Abraham Lincoln died on April 15, 1865. Quite obvious to me is that Emiline was in labor with my great-grandfather at that time.

My first thought was someone had found out where they had gone. Both of the mothers of Andrew and Emiline were probably sick with worry and may have somehow communicated with Emiline or Andrew or even found their way to where they were. When the word of them leaving this way by both families had been found out, they probably had to know where they were going in order for the families to somehow stay in contact with each other. Andrew and Emiline had packed up and moved into another territory, which was now Breckenridge Springs, Panola County, Texas.

The Civil War ended on April 9, 1865, with General Lee surrendering in Virginia. The end of the war had not yet been echoed across all of the states, and there were many slaves who hid from those who could take them back home if captured during that time. When word of this war finally became known to be over, Andrew and Emiline had probably never felt safe in others knowing who they were and that they had left North Carolina several years prior to the outbreak of the Civil War. This is why my immediate family members were reluctant to believe they were born in North Carolina and with Andrew's possible connection to this Slade family for whom Sir Benjamin was looking.

Just thinking of what reaction Andrew and Emiline had when they were aware of the war being over and finally the slaves being free must have been an overwhelming feeling to behold. This was a true reality. Andrew was a free person, and Emiline's children no longer belonged to the slave era. Slavery was being abolished in their lifetimes. To them this meant their children's generations of descendants would grow up whole and not separate. I could just imagine the joy they shared together along with other slave families in the justice that had prevailed, and they could move about as free persons and not slaves. My great-grandfather, Lincoln, would be their first child to be born free after the Civil War ended in 1865, with the losses of over six hundred thousand people.

There was a picture of their son, Lincoln, that I recall seeing at my Aunt Isabell's home when I visited her in 1982. I had been going through a divorce and needed to seek out advice from other family members regarding their input on what I should do and how to handle that situation.

Upon my visit that day, I noticed a picture of a man on my Aunt Isabell's bedroom wall, and I asked her who he was. She replied to me that was her grandfather and my great-grandfather, Lincoln Slade. I had at that time noticed he look quite different but never gave it another thought as to why. When I asked my Aunt Isabell about his father, she replied her Grandfather Lincoln was all she had known about.

I had my cousin Isabell, same name as her mother's, recopy the photograph of Lincoln, and she sent a copy of him to me. When I compared him to the printed copy of William Slade off the Internet, I saw a remarkable resemblance, especially of the noses on each of them. I was astonished that this, too, was a link back to England. Lincoln had English features. It had never occurred to me one of my ancestors would have been located there. No one had ever discussed our ancestors to us in that way.

My mother at one point did discuss with me that Lincoln's wife's mother, my great-grandmother, Ellen Burns Slade's, mother, Mary Ann Strong, was a white woman. That might have been where I dropped the connection not going over to the Slade ancestry.

My great-great-grandfather, Andrew Slade, and his wife, Emiline, made do right where they were. After hiding for those few years, they did settle in Breckenridge Springs, Panola County, Texas, and raised the family they had started. One record I found regarding when he died stated he passed away on February 27, 1883, in Panola County, Texas, and yes, he was born according to this record in North Carolina around 1815 and is buried at the Mt. Zion CME Church Cemetery, east of Carthage, Panola County, Texas.

Emiline's birth date showed as 1824 and also born in North Carolina, but there was no information on her burial site. My guess would be she is also buried there. My great-grandfather, Lincoln, is in this same cemetery location and died June 16, 1918.

Also mentioned on this weblink is a Sarah Slade. Could this be the connection to where all of this started, a descendant of a slave girl named in the will of Thomas Miles, written in 1766, whose name is Sarah? I found a Sarah Slade born in Caswell around 1790 who was currently at the age of ninety, according to the 1880 United States Census Record. Her home at that time was in Williamston, Martin, North Carolina, and she is black and widowed. Could

this be Andrew's slave mother? That would put her around the child-bearing age for her to give birth to him and other children she may or may not have had, or was it she never really married but was the mother of all of William Slade's slave children? She is among family members whose names showed John Green, Sarah Green, Gracy Green, and Albert Green, and Sarah's relationship to this family showed something other than a direct one.

The family now located there in Panola County, Texas, is where my grandfather, Andrew (Andy) Slade, was born on April 18, 1898. Raised there with the family and his siblings, his father, Lincoln, was also a farmer. My grandfather met and married my grandmother, Izora Staten Slade, and together they started a family. My mother, Elsie, their third child, said, "When I was born, one of my mother's sisters said to my mother that when she saw me after I was born, I looked like a pink baby."

My grandmother, Izora Staten Slade, being of Indian and Jamaican descent, assumed this was because of my Grandfather Andrew's mother, Ellen Burns Slade, and her side of the family, not fully understanding she also took ancestry after that of her father, Andy. Even when she was growing up, she didn't quite understand why her appearance seemed different.

It's known that when a European man mates with an African woman, there comes forth a "rainbow" of colored children. This is why today and because of our heritage the races are mixed the way they are. My mother was a beautiful woman with perfect hands and feet. When she entered a school contest, she won first place. She could have been in a television commercial, where the need for a beautiful pair of hands to promote certain products for sale to the public could have been seen.

My mother was born in Clarksville, Wagoner County, in Oklahoma. She was delivered by a midwife who did not record her birthday of November 7, 1921, at the time of her birth. Her father was a sharecropper, and he worked for a man named Mr. Tarpley. She said he was a nice man. The family lived across the road from the school they attended, which took about three minutes walking to cross over to get to.

From there she attended the John West School, a few miles from Clarksville, which was a large structure of just one room and a much nicer location than the other one. She enjoyed going there and when she was older, she recalled as a child that there was a cemetery where some of the local people, including Indians from the Five Civilized Tribes, were buried. She stated across the road from the school was a deep gorge where these people had been buried, and they saw lots of skeletons and bones that were very white. In this burial site, bones were seen from the head to the midsection and for them as young children growing up, this was very scary.

In Arkansas Valley, a town near Clarksville, they also found lots of bow-and-arrow pieces, and they kept them for years. After a while of playing with them, mimicking the games of cowboys and Indians, they would throw them away.

They lived about a half-mile from the Arkansas River but always lived on a knoll. The knoll wasn't too high, just high enough for the floodwaters when the river overflowed to keep them out of harm's way. Some of their neighbors would come to their house when there was a storm or a tornado coming. They were these people's closest neighbors. They had a cellar with a



The Slade Family
left to right, daughters, Elvira, Isabell, Elsie, Marine, and Opal.

heater and wooden benches to sit on and could hear the thunder or rainstorms when they came through.

The next school they attended was called Mark Hannah. The grades ranged from the first to the twelfth grade. The school was close to, as she recalls it, "a swinging little town called Tullahassee," in Wagoner County. In Tullahassee there was a drug store, a doctor's office, a cafe', a grocery store, a post office, and three churches, and she states she loved this place. The home lived in Wagoner County was owned by a full-blooded Indian woman named Salley Jones, and she states she was a very nice person. Their landlord, Salley Jones, would come to visit them from time to time.

My grandfather, Andy Slade, joined church there and was the choir director at one time in Tullahassee. They would hitch the mule to the wagon, and their father would take them to school. A friend of her father's, Mr. Huff, a salesman who she remembered was a white man, would also take them to school in his car if they happened to be walking. Her best subjects were algebra, spelling, and reading. She loved working crossword puzzles, which she still enjoys today.

My mother would have been able to attend Langston University in Oklahoma after finishing high school. Her mother and father were working extra hours at that time just to make ends meet. They recognized she had a special gift for learning and sacrificed the family pool of money just to see her get a college education. She stated to me after recognizing what they were doing and her other siblings had not yet completed high school, she dropped out of college and found a job. She just couldn't bear seeing her parents struggle that way just for her to get this type of education.

For about a year, she did attend a college called Flipper Davis, which started out as an Indian school, but later became a two-dorm college. At this college was a very strict matron of the dorm whose name she recalls was Miss Flewellen. Also teaching at this college is the sister of the famed champion boxer Joseph Louis Barrow, Marva Barrow. Joe Louis was born on May 13, 1914, in a cabin in the cotton fields of Lexington, Alabama. The Barrow family lived in Boley, Oklahoma, and his sister was a teacher at the Flipper Davis College.

The move the family made to Fresno came around 1943. She came out in 1944 to have me in Fresno, and also born there were my three brothers: David, Lawrence, and Kenneth Wallace. My sisters, Beverly Jo, Elsie Darlene, and Pamela, were all born in Richmond, California.

To help out making ends meet in Fresno, she learned to pick grapes, strawberries, tomatoes, and other fruits and vegetables. The pay for their labor was pretty good then. Her mother, Izora, took in laundry for several servicemen during World War II. She would wash the clothes, and her mother would iron them.

These servicemen were all white with ranks ranging from sergeants, lieutenants, and captains. Their uniforms to be washed and ironed were always brought to them in these beautiful baskets, she recalls. My grandmother would sort out each uniform and place a tag with a price on each one in order to know what to charge the servicemen when they were picked up.

The word got around about what they were doing, which never left them without work. The servicemen would pay good tips or give them extra cash when they did a very good job. Mak-

ing a living this way then, she tells me, wasn't too bad. That kept her and her mother out of the cotton and fruit fields of Fresno.

My grandfather, Andy, wasn't a stay-at-home man. Farming was in his blood and an occupation that was always in demand. In Oklahoma he smoked Prince Albert tobacco and when he came to Fresno, the cigarettes of his choice were Camels. He always had a pack of spearmint chewing gum he kept in his overalls that he wore to work with him, and after retiring from the farming fields for the day, out came that gum and those cigarettes. My mother says he was a gentle man and wasn't known to hardly raise his voice to them, but their mother, Izora, with those eight children, well, that was another story.

How I miss him. He left this family at an early age. I never got to know him or my grandfather, Charlie Wise, when I started growing older. Somewhere along the way, I was deprived of their love of being one of their granddaughters. I never had them or my grandmothers to sit around the family table or sit on a couch and have them tell me about what kind of lives they had led. This was my empty space I'd had all my life. There was no one, no one.

A couple of years ago, my granddaughter, Talayna, called me at home and said they had a school assignment that required them to ask parents or grandparents about their ancestry. When I told her about the Slade ancestor, she said to me, "Grandma, are you saying slave?" which to her over the phone sounded that way. I replied twice to Talayna that no, I wasn't saying, "Slave, Talayna. I was saying Slade."

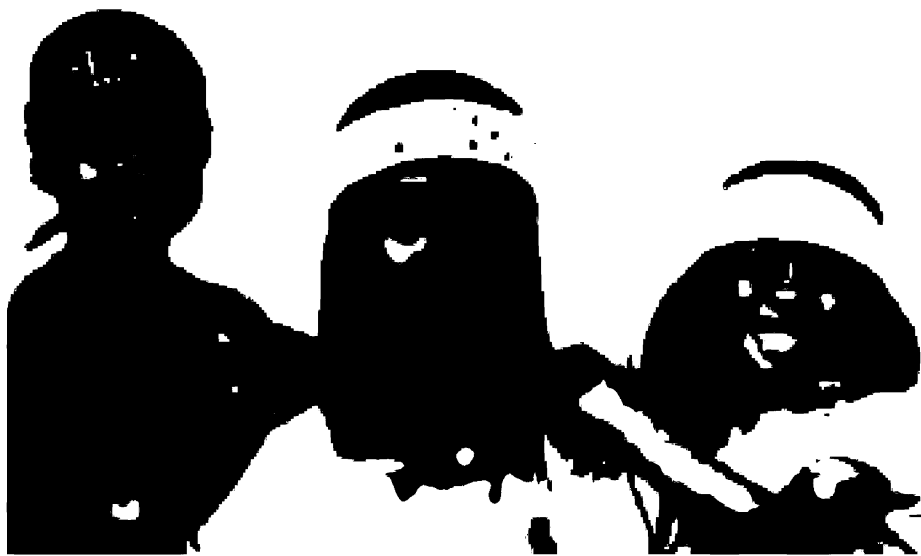
To this day, when I go back and rekindle that conversation with her about this Slade ancestor, I cry all over again, knowing what I know now. Yes, Talayna and Tramare, my grandson and granddaughter, your descendant was a "slave," a "Slade slave." I just didn't know at that time how important to our family this "Slade slave" was until this day.

After discovering and reading about this Slade family, one might ask how I felt on that night of this phenomenon when I discovered the face of this man was the spitting image of my mother. My only answer I could give was that it was awesome and unbelievable. This was a feeling that comes once in a lifetime. It goes away and comes back to me time and time again when I'm sitting still, remembering my first thoughts as to why I had to be the one to witness this.

At first I felt myself unable to speak or even move my body. I felt myself getting ready to pass out but managed somehow to leave the room. I went back to the patio door, opened it, and got the air I needed to maintain my sanity, which had seemingly left out of my body for that moment in time.

What on earth had just happened was another thought that ran through my mind. What did this all mean to me? And my next thought was is this for real? After crying a spell and getting my composure back, I calmed down and went back to my computer monitor and just sat there for about a half-hour, stunned at William Slade's face. I literally went over every nook and cranny of his face, trying to make sense of why this shouldn't be who it was.

There was no way I could phone my mother at that hour of the night when I saw this picture of him and awaken her from her sleep to tell her I was looking at a picture of her on my



My family grandson, Tramare; daughter, Tracey; and granddaughter, Talayna.

computer monitor. No one I have ever been aware of had discovered their ancestor that way, especially a slave descendant. That was all that was running through my head at that time.

There was a lot of research I did after my mother confirmed this was the ancestor. It was impossible for her to say it wasn't. Her appearance and using the phrase "mulatto" and understanding then it was true—this was our beginning from this ancestor all those many years ago. It took me what seemed a lifetime to recover from this. There were days and nights I'd just sit on the patio swing, stare into the heavens, and keep wondering if this was the work of the Almighty. What message was there in it for this to be revealed to me this way?

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said it best when stated from one of the excerpts of his "I Have a Dream" speech he gave to the world at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. on August 28, 1963, stating, "His eyes had seen the coming of the LORD," and the excerpt that held a special meaning was, "I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and every mountain shall be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. And when this happens, when we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every tenement and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old spiritual, 'Free at last, free at last, Thank God Almighty, we are free at last.'"

Was this a revelation or a phenomenon? This is still the question in which I revel today. In time I believe this revelation or this phenomenon will come forth to understand the value it's going to bring to all those who believe they can uncover with diligence who and from where their ancestors did come. Most of us have some background in slave ancestry. We have, however, been frustrated because of the no-paper trail to lead us to how and where we can go to uncover this information on our ancestors. For me the message was quite clear. On that night, I believe the Almighty showed me it was for real. I was able to see this ancestor for myself.

Abisha Slade, the last slaveholder who held my Andrew there in North Carolina, whether he wanted to manumit him or not, couldn't keep Andrew from being the man he really was in God's eyes. Andrew needed to have his own identity and be with the love of his life. They saw no color barrier. My descendants Andrew and Emiline just knew they were meant to be together. They were meant to bring forth their family. From this family, I'm able to tell their story of their love, their anguish, and their sorrow they had endured, and also of life that had been given to those of us they had brought forth here many years ago.

Was this the way William Slade felt, knowing the only way he was going to attain a family, a slave family, was the way it was done? If it hadn't been done that way, this phenomenon between the ancestors here in the United States and the ancestor in England would have never crossed paths. Whose hand was it that had joined us together? What a question to answer that just to ponder over it is phenomenal. Where does this go from this point in time?

We commissioned Marvin Slade, a minister of his own church, the Good Samaritan Missionary Baptist Church, in Vallejo, California, to do the DNA test for our family through the

Slade Genealogy Department. Family tree DNA was selected for this project. If you were a Slade, you could join in the project with the surname of Slade and obtain a discount.

Sir Benjamin Slade wanted to do a DNA test to find his closest match to his family line of Slades from England. Pastor Slade received the results back, and they disclosed with the Y chromosome for the male descendant that there were twenty-five markers used to determine if you were related to that surname. His DNA was only being compared to the other Slades who are making a claim that they are perhaps related to Sir Benjamin Slade in England.

The markers twenty-five out of twenty-five revealed you were a recent ancestor like a father who has had a son. The markers for Pastor Marvin Slade indicated twenty-four out of twenty-five and twenty-three out of twenty-five and were considered this translation: You are related but probably much more distantly, and these are only estimates, not exact figures.

Pastor Marvin Slade is considered an African-American in our society today. I ran across a weblink regarding black paternal lineages and European ancestry, which stated:

The Y chromosome determines paternal ancestry. If a European man fathers a son with an African woman, the son receives the Y chromosome from his father. Even though the son may consider himself African-American or of African descent, he and all of his male descendants have a Y chromosome with European ancestry.

Before DNA and other tools used to determine different equations of our genetic makeup, it would have been impossible for a white ancestor to believe a black man would be able to inherit such a trait and be able to trace back to England or anywhere else on this continent his place of origin there. Here again I believe God, in all of His wisdom, made this possible for a reason. This today is how this family of Slade descendants understood where part of their beginnings derived from. This ancestor William Slade, who was born here, planted his seed in this newly discovered part of the continent several hundred years ago.

My ancestor William Slade sired his slave children as a free man whose ancestors arrived here in this new part of the world. There was no one to challenge him or look down upon him when he made that sovereign decision. He knew what he had decided on doing. Not even his wife, Martha, would have had anything to say in the matter. These are my beliefs as to why this Slade family exists here today in the United States.

His son, Andrew, felt the same need to be a free man, not a slave. They both felt the desires to bring forth and have their perspective families to love and cherish, to watch grow and nurture, and to be considered a man among their fellow people of the world.

These were two men who were born into an environment that would connect them together until the end of time. With this connection is my existence here today. Each had their own subsistence as to what they wanted and went forth to achieve their goals and acquire their families.

I feel even though they both had different agendas to find their place among their fellow man, they would have had no idea their descendants, English and African, would have acquired this knowledge to find each other again as the world exists today.



The Slade Family.
Seated Izora Slade, left to right, sons, Robert Slade, Vernon Slade, and Ernest Slade.

Two quotes come to mind when I think about humankind and understanding we are all connected. One quote is from the book from I've used excerpts, which is *When the Past Refused to Die*, by William S. Powell; *A History of Caswell County, North Carolina, 1777-1977*; and Eleanor "Gypsy" Wyatt, Chairman of the Freedman Descendants of the Five Civilized Tribes, *Whose Blood Is This That Runs Through My Veins?* about a black Indian woman whose life she has dedicated to helping her people and others.

Since now understanding my place with this ancestor being that of his fourth great-granddaughter, if he were to come back in my timeframe and into my environment, just how would I be perceived by him?

I already know from my research that my Irish ancestor, Patrick Wise, accepted his responsibility to his son, my Grandfather Charlie Wise, and loved him like a father loves his sons. I know my Jamaican ancestor, Balane Staten, his ancestor coming from Africa and Jamaica, loved his family and the descendants he brought forth. I know my Indian ancestor, Benjamin Hyams, loved his family and his descendants who came from him.

Within my heart, if this ancestor William Slade was here with me today, I know that he, too, would receive me with open arms and love me like any great-grandchild who came from him. There are feelings human beings cannot explain. We know they are just there.

With their descendants thriving today and with more generations of descendants to come, these ancestors are all living souls within our beings, and each generation will bring forth a new beginning. They all were once here and will never be forgotten.

My only intentions from the beginning of all my searches were to simply find out if I could find our closest lineage lines to the names of these ancestors with whom my families are associated. With this Slade ancestor, I'm now searching for Andrew's slave mother's name in Caswell and just who she was and what she was like. Do I even resemble her in any way, and what was her life like living with this family of Slades in North Carolina? Someone out there holds the answer to these questions since this discovery. In time I believe it will be revealed to me.

In closing with my Slade ancestry, I can recall viewing two television programs. One program I viewed was regarding a mother who was a rape victim. She had a black daughter and gave this daughter away because somehow this black daughter didn't fit in with their family. Years later this woman wanted to see this child and sought her out and found her.

The other program I also remember is one of a black English woman who went out to find her white English mother and discovered she also had a half-sister. They were also united. There will always be this bond between a mother and her children and a father and his children. God designed our inner spirits that way. The word He designed for this feeling is called "love," a feeling that is unmistakable in living out our lives as human beings.

And to you, our unknown one, I'm finally coming to the end, the end without knowing who you are. I think of you nearly every day since I've discovered you did exist here once upon a time long ago in the past. Will we ever discover who you are and where you came from? With your existence here and with the tears and anguish, you spent your entire life without your freedom. It brings me to shame how we did not try to find you before.

When I close my eyes, all I can see when I think about you is an old African woman going back to her homeland after her death, but your back is turned. I cannot see your face. You are just walking alone by yourself with a cane, wearing a beautiful African dress and looking straight ahead, but your back is turned. I cannot see your face. Your walking cane depicts to me that you are tired and worn as you are walking. You sense, however, that you are home now, just looking around like your mother may have told you you would be doing someday. This is where you came from, my child, she may have told you: your sweet home of Africa.

There are some trees in a flowering meadow field with the dawning of a sunset I can see as I'm closing my eyes to see you, but you don't want to turn around. The pain of looking back to a time before when you existed there is too overwhelming for you, like a jolt of lightning that has struck your body. You sense, if you turn around, your hope to be free will dissipate and you'll cry out with pain again. I'd like to think if you do cry again, these will be tears of joy you feel within your soul because you are free and you are home at last in Africa.

With God granting your spirit to us to hear you, you may say to all of us one day, "When I'm resurrected from the Almighty, I'll know then I can turn around and see all of you, whom I have brought forth here many years ago. From all of you, I will have your love as your mother, your grandmother, and your great-grandmother, and not as a slave."

In our reply to your spirit, our unknown one, we will say yes, we will return that love and adore you and thank you for your gift of life. From your past with only you knowing what happened here a time long ago, one thing is for sure: This lineage line of Slades from England without your existence here as a slave would perhaps be extinct forever.

Chapter Five

STATEN: FROM JAMAICA TO THE AMERICAS

The Transatlantic Trade Triangle consisted of three journeys to import slaves. First was the outward passage from Europe to Africa, carrying manufactured supplies. Second was the middle passage from Africa to the Caribbean, carrying African captives and other commodities, and then third was the homeward passage back to Europe, carrying other cargo.

To understand how that showed on a map would indicate a ship leaving from Great Britain sailing to the Gulf of Guinea. Here guns and other goods were dropped off in exchange for slaves to be put aboard ship and then transported next to Jamaica and Barbados. From that exchange, slaves from there were then taken aboard another ship, dropped off, and sold into slavery in the Americas. My ancestors, Slade and Staten, made their way here under this transatlantic triangle like the millions of other slave descendant ancestors did.

Sailing from Great Britain aboard ships would be goods also consisting of copper; manufactured cloths; silk materials from Asia; glassware; Manila, a fiber from the Philippine plant used to make rope; fabric; and strong light brown or buff paper made from Manila hemp and pots. From Africa came the enslaved men, women, and children and Indigo, a blue dye obtained from plants in Africa the color of a deep violet blue.

Folklore of this ancestor with his beginnings comes from the Island of Jamaica, probably from the mid-eighteenth century. Ships sailing from Great Britain went to Africa and brought African slaves to Jamaica to work in their sugar plantations. What part of Africa they came from is debatable, but most of the African slaves were taken out of Guinea. Just how many African slaves were forced and exported from their homelands here again is debatable. There were obviously millions taken away for over a period of nearly three centuries. This ancestor would be on my maternal side, my Grandmother Izora Slade, with her maiden name of Staten.

There was a catastrophic earthquake I've read about that happened in 1692 in Port Royal in which thousands of Africans were killed. It's noted here that Henry Morgan and Captain Kidd, known as bloodthirsty pirates in Port Royal, became rich. Port Royal was known as one of the wicket cities in the world. Somewhere in between those years after this earthquake, my

Family History

Great Grand Parents

Names	Father		Mother	
	When	Where	When	Where
Grandfather John				
Grandmother Mary				
Grandfather John				
Grandmother Mary				

Parents

Names	Father		Mother	
	When	Where	When	Where
Father John				
Mother Mary				
Father John				
Mother Mary				

Grand Children

Names	Father		Mother	
	When	Where	When	Where
John				
Mary				
John				
Mary				
John				
Mary				

Children

Names	Father		Mother	
	When	Where	When	Where
John				
Mary				

ancestor made his or her way after being captured to the Americas. The Transatlantic Slave Trade from the wealthy Caribbean Islands made way to the southern states, where they were sold into slavery.

This ancestor's name is Balane Staten, born in North Carolina in around 1813. Following this ancestor was frustrating because of his first name. There weren't very many records on him for one reason or another. Folklore tells me his ancestor had been taken from Kingsbury, a city known in Jamaica. I don't know at what age he or she was when sold to this slave owner in North Carolina. I found him in the county of Edgecombe.

There were two conflicting pieces of information I found regarding my Slade ancestry at which I had to take a closer look. I found a passenger and immigration list index with a William Slade, an immigrant in the years 1654 to 1663, sailing from Barbados, and the annotation reads:

From the archives of Bristol, England, with the title "Servants to Foreign Plantations." Emigrants to New England, Maryland, Virginia, New York, Pennsylvania, Canada, and the Caribbean Islands.¹⁶

A record of the first settlers in the colonies of North America, 1654 to 1685, including the names with places of origin of more than ten-thousand servants to foreign plantations who sailed from the Port of Bristol to Virginia, Maryland, and other parts of the Atlantic Coast, and also to the West Indies from 1654 to 1685. Another annotation reads:

Year 1675, which states:

Date and port of arrival of the Hercules from Surinam, the America, and the Henry and Sarah. Number of slaves and Indians accompanying the immigrant is also provided.

I didn't know and still don't know if this William Slade, who lived in the state of Maryland, might have also been related to me. He may have been someone who ran slave ships from Jamaica and Barbados to the Americas during those years and quite unknowingly, he may have brought both of these two southern African slave inhabitants who would end up being my ancestors aboard one or more of these slave ships.

I followed the slave owner with the name of Staten and saw variations of how it would have been spelled. It was the first name that haunted me for a while. Finally one night, it all seemed to come together. I went through the alphabet with the letter "B" when looking for the slave owner's first name and came across two possible assimilations of what the first name might have been. Since I had acquired my own technique on ways of searching and learning as I went along compiling information on my ancestors, I learned the not-so-obvious could and sometimes turned out to be the obvious, and since slaves weren't taught to read or write, especially in the year in which he was born, he probably had only heard the slave holder's name and sounded it out for it be written by someone else in the family later on.

Wiley Staten, my great-grandfather, shows his father, Balane Staten, on the 1870 census as living in Panola County, Texas, with the first name as Balas Staten. My Grandfather Andrew Slade wrote the name of Balane Staten with his marriage papers of 1917 in Texas. This record only showed two of his children, and their names were Tennessee and Wiley Staten. They were all living close together as were many newly emancipated slave families after the Civil War ended.

Searching for the last slaveholder with the name of Staten (Staton) in North Carolina led me to an immigrant whose name showed in the American Genealogical-Biographical Index as Bathier Staton, born 175- in North Carolina, and he is the head of a family there. A 1790 United States Federal Census Record shows the name of Bathier Staton living in the county of Johnston, North Carolina. From another record of 1810, I found a Bytha Staton living in Edgecombe.

The county of Edgecombe is named after Richard Edgecombe, who was an English nobleman. The 1820 and 1830 spellings for the first names were Bythel and Bthal Staton. Census takers obviously didn't know how to spell certain names, either. Finally in the 1840 United States Federal Census Records, the name of Baker Staton appears in that same location. Somewhere as noted, one had to understand the (soundex) method of understanding the changes one name could take on and be misspelled in the colonial years.

It was in the 1850 slave database where Baker Staton appears as the slaveholder of Balas Staton, a thirty-five-year-old male, and his color noted was black. I've been told that my great-great-grandfather's son, Wiley, was a very tall, black, and good-looking man. The 1860 census shows Balas, aka Baker, Staton still there with the age of forty-eight showing. Most records were kept regarding the slaves' ages but were within certain age ranges. To be exact, unless recorded today, was probably more superficial.

My great-great-grandfather, Balane Staten, probably met his wife, Vinie, born in Virginia, after the Civil War and while leaving the plantation from Edgecombe in North Carolina, where they had migrated to astonish me in the location I found them next. They were also living among the Slades who had already left North Carolina before the Civil War. The little town at that time was called Brekenridge Springs, Panola County, Texas. Just how and when this happened, no one knows.

Wiley Staten, my great-grandfather, is said to have made trips back to Jamaica at least once a year to bring back hooked cheese, a hundred pounds of rice, and dried mackerel for the families. I didn't see him in the occupation as a farmer. I was told he was an herb doctor. This would be the man who dressed up in a suit and tie every day and went out with his little black satchel bag, carrying his medicines in it. Like a doctor does, he helped relieve aches and pains and cured ailments among some of the locals who were complaining of ailments when they were sick. My great-grandmother, Clara, being his wife, probably knew from her father, Ben Hyams, my Choctaw ancestor, just what to look for among different plants and herbs to pick to make these tribal medicines the Indians used years before for ailments for which they had to cure their sick and injured.

There was a sister of my Grandmother Izora (Staten) Slade, whose name is Inetta. Inetta (Staten) Flake and her sister, Ruth (Staten) Samuels, both lived in California along with some



*The Staten family picture, taken around 1901.
My grandmother, Izora Staten, is sitting on her mother's lap.*

other Staten families. Inetta, however, had a precarious accident when she was a young woman in San Francisco, where she had worked for a well-to-do family as a maid or housekeeper. She had one daughter to support and made a living the best way she knew how at that time.

In leaving from work in San Francisco one day, her employer, who had been drinking that afternoon, and I can't say with any certainties that the woman was an alcoholic, offered to drive her home. The pattern Inetta used for transportation in getting home from her job was by bus. While her employer was driving her home that day, Inetta was sitting in the passenger's side in the car. Suddenly, while her employer was driving in the evening traffic, she had an accident. With this accident, Inetta's left shoulder was broken and she was unable to use it or function with it after the car crash.

She stayed in the hospital until her recovery from the crash but was never able to use that arm again. She always had it positioned against her body. It seemed to stay stationary there. There was, so she thought, no way for her to take care of herself and her only child.

Before Inetta thought of suing her employer, an offer was made to her that would take care of her for the rest of her natural life. The offer was that her employer would purchase an apartment building in San Francisco, California, with enough units to have several tenants living in it, and Inetta could make her living renting out the units. She took up the offer and continued to prosper and take care of herself and her daughter from this proposal and final agreement with her employer.

Inetta's injuries had, however, left her partly dysfunctional. Gradually she began understanding now that her working years were over due to the accident. She had settled down to live out the rest of her life with her daughter. She even joined a church in San Francisco after recovering and getting herself adjusted to this new way of life.

The church she joined was the People's Temple, under the leadership of Jim Jones. Like many people worshipers seeking a new beginning with their lives of reverence, she found solace within this church's organization. As an active member, like many of Jim Jones followers, she became mesmerized in the church's foundations of being a member.

One of her conditions as a member was to sign over her property to the People's Temple, of which was a condition perhaps all members of this cult had to do, even their monies, bank accounts, etc. Fortunately for Inetta, her property agreement that was set up with her employer's attorneys had been written up in a binding legal language that restricted her from releasing it to anyone else. Therefore, she couldn't transfer ownership as a condition to remain a member of the People's Temple organization.

To Inetta and to everyone else, what came next shocked the world. On November 18, 1978, she learned of the mass murder-suicide in Jonestown, Guyana. On that fateful day, cult leader Jim Jones, who took his followers with him to Jonestown, drank cyanide-laced Kool-Aid. The aftermath of this horrendous catastrophe of its members who went with him placed a toll upon the world one had not witnessed here in the United States until that day. Inetta had escaped her demise because of her accident, which saved her life and kept her from following the others going to Guyana. Besides her accident, which kept her arm stationary, she had also been going blind.

Reaching old age, Inetta's daughter became her executor, decided to sell her mother's apartment building, and made the move back to Carthage, Texas, where her parents were buried. This is where Inetta wanted to live out her final days.

I took her to the bus depot with her daughter and grandson and said goodbye. It was the last time I saw her. Sure enough, when she died, her daughter made good on her last dying wish. She was laid to rest among her father and mother, Wiley and Clara Staten, in Texas.

To find out who might still be alive for more information on this ancestor, I began searching for other Statens who lived in Texas. Over the years, while living in Northern California, my mother and her siblings had lost contact with her mother's paternal and maternal side of the families. When they last saw each other, they were young adults who had left Oklahoma and Texas during World War II.

I was able to locate a cousin of my mother's whose name was Virginia Barnes so that I could acquire more information on my great-great-grandparents, Balane and Vinie and, of course, Wiley, my great-grandfather. Virginia had known the Hyams and Staten families. Because the families didn't talk very much about what they had gone through, however, she couldn't relate to me the information I was seeking from her. I told Virginia I would always stay in contact with her. I promised her I'd phone her every Friday just to see how she was doing. She had recently lost another child, a daughter.

Our phone calling went on for almost a year until one Friday when I called her and she didn't answer. I gathered she went to the doctor's office or her children or grandchildren had picked her up for the day outside. I phoned back the next day and the day after with no response, and that began to worry me. Just about every Friday, I would phone her and if I missed, she would phone me. Still with no answer, I knew something was wrong. I could just sense it.

Along the way with our phone conversations, I made sure I had one of her children's phone numbers. When I received no answer that following second Friday, I phoned her home again. Her granddaughter answered the phone. She told me Virginia had passed away on August 18, 2006 at 11:40 a.m. That was on a Friday. I will never forget it was on a Friday, a day I just picked at random to make sure we phoned and kept in contact with each other. She is buried with her mother, Isabella Staten Duncan, at the Bethlehem Cemetery in Texas.

My great-grandfather, Wiley, was born in March 1872 and passed away in January 1947 in Los Angeles. He had been living with one of his sons, Warmead (Racer) Staten, in Los Angeles and had retired for the night after Warmead's birthday party. When the family went to check on him the following morning, he seemingly had died in his sleep. Grandpa Wiley probably had diabetes as one of the contributing factors regarding his health problems. I had found and kept a letter he'd written to his daughter, my Grandmother Izora, about the year of 1944, which reads as follows:

*Mrs. Izora Slade
2180 Eunice Avenue
Fresno, California*

My Slade Phenomenon

My dear daughter, I received your letter, and I was more than glad to hear from you. You say Sky son has come back to the good old U.S.A. and yes, the Lord is with us. I want you to continue to pray, for the Lord has been so merciful to us, and yes, I am doing well and know you are. Please kiss Vernon for me. Tell the girls to be sweet. I want to see all the children, but I am old and nearly blind and I am afraid to travel.

All the people are so nice to me. I am yet in Carthage, yet Racer and Sip want me to stay with them. Ruth and Fish and Bob are out there in California, where you are, and the Nett girls are out there with Ruth. Nett is in Shreveport, and all the rest of us are here and doing well, and yes, Papa will never forget you. Don't worry one bit about me, for the Lord is with me. Give my love to the whole family. This is all for this time.

Your papa, Wiley Staten Carthage, Texas

This was the last letter written to my knowledge by my great-grandfather, Wiley Staten.

I had traveled back with these ancestors into an earlier dimension in time. I could only imagine what took place in the early history of this country from the books I have read, the television history programs I've watched, and the research I have done so far. I have held close to my heart the bloods of four of my known forefathers.

Their names of Wise, my ancestor from Ireland; Hyams, my Native American already here; Staten, his transatlantic voyage from Africa to Jamaica; and Slade, the ancestor from England, all are a part of me. Each one of these ancestors has left behind their existence here. Each one of them has lived on in the families they have created. For the first time, I understood how I had become part of their lives. Their mere existence here has left behind more than their names, but the true reality of one's own family lineage.

I'm content with myself now in understanding this part of my family history. Because they all came before me, I can now leave for those who will come after me part of their ancestors' lineages for them to take up where I've left off. They will be able to explore and expand the wonderful knowledge of their inner beings and thank God in all of His wisdom for bringing to me this incredible phenomenon. The truths will always have a way of winning in the end.

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